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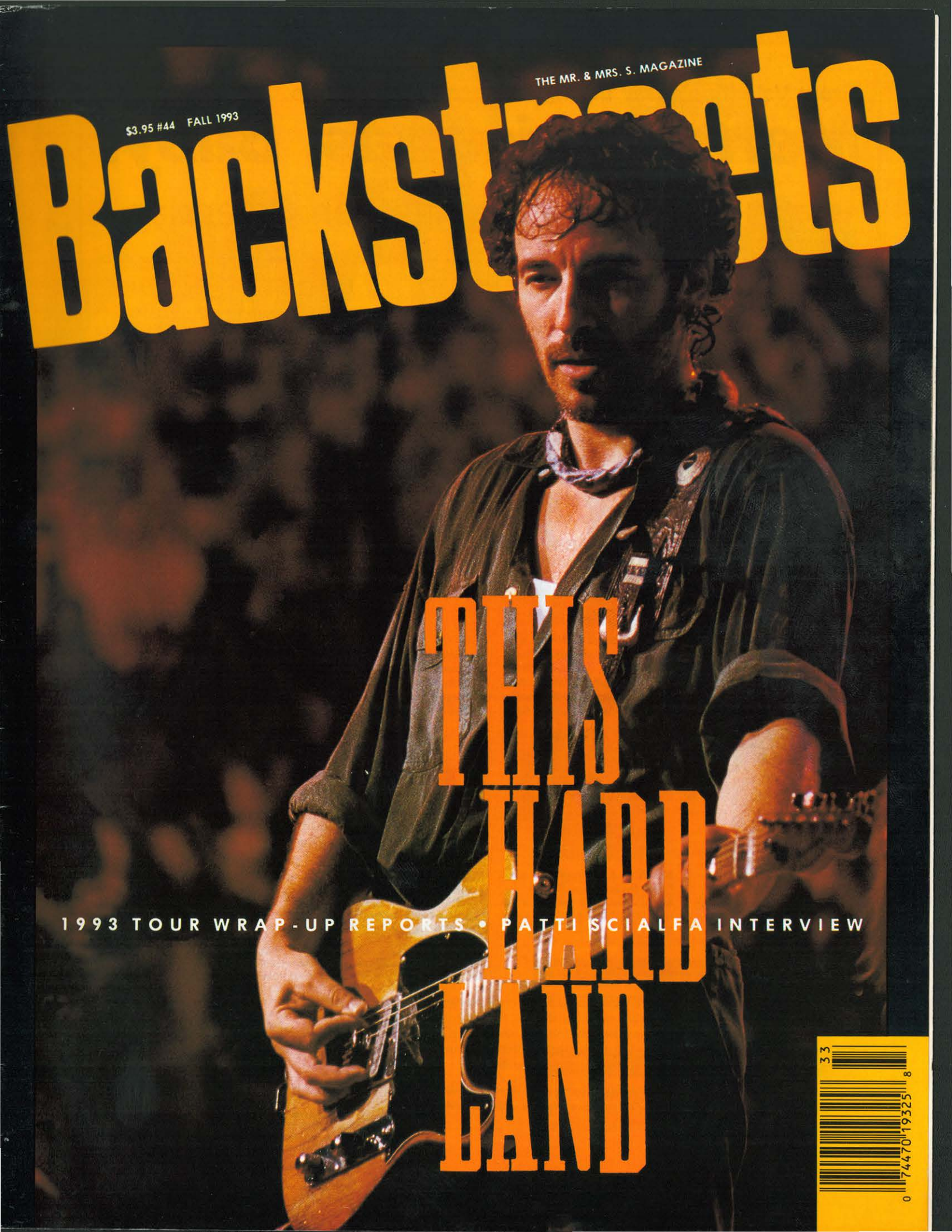
THE MR. & MRS. S. MAGAZINE

Backstreets



THIS HARD LAND

1993 TOUR WRAP-UP REPORTS • PATTI SCIALFA INTERVIEW

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RICCARDO MARCANTE PHOTO

Riccardo and Federico across the borderline with the Boss. Dusseldorf, 4/5/93.

Backstreets

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Michelle Weiss Photo

LETTERS

TWO FACES

Dear Editor:

Fans who saw Bruce Springsteen wrap up his '92-93 World Tour on the East coast last June saw their local hero at both his worst and his best. To say these two shows were each "great" is simply an overstatement spurred on by bystanders wishing to celebrate the return home of the Boss, without actually analyzing what they saw.

At the Meadowlands, Bruce was simply a wild man unleashed. If the moving acoustic set, including killer versions of "I Ain't Got No Home," and "Adam Raised a Cain," didn't convince you that the show was special, and the 14 minute "Light of Day," where Bruce leapt on Roy's piano, screamed out the distances he had to travel, did push-ups, etc., failed to ignite your enthusiasm, then certainly the array of special guests (including a near- E Street reunion) had to make even the most critical Bruce fan realize that this was probably the best show the man has put on in 13 years! But more importantly, more than maybe any other show in his career, Springsteen proved that it was HIS concert. He was in control and though he chose to include some special guests, they only added to the accomplishments of one man and his music.

Two days later, after a joyful appearance on "Late Night," Bruce just seemed to give up and the mood of the two special nights changed dramatically. While he probably never intended to duplicate the spirit of the Meadowlands show, as revealed in his choice to omit must-play songs like "Born in the USA," and "Thunder Road," after guest Terence Trent D'Arby received some mild boos Bruce's whole attitude seemed to change from "Hey, let's rock 'n' roll," to "I just want to finish this show and get the hell out of here."

I don't condone the behavior of those few fans who booed D'Arby, but what ever happened to Bruce's beliefs about freedom of speech? Why do the real fans have to settle for less because of the actions of these morons? Why didn't Bruce foresee that allowing D'Arby to sing a song of such slow tempo as "I Have Faith in These Desolate Times" seemed totally out of place in between rockers like "Who'll Stop the Rain" and "Jole Blon"? I think the general public deserves a little bit more, and for those who saw each show we really got to see two different sides of the "new" Bruce.

Matt Holzhauer
New York, NY

LUCK O' THE TOWN

Dear Editor:

I was one of the lucky 600 at the National Stadium on Dublin's South Circular Road the night that Bruce joined Joe Ely for three songs (not two as per your article in *Backstreets* #43) [Springsteen also sat in on Ely's "I Keep My Fingernails Long So They Click When I Play The Piano," a song about Jerry Lee Lewis—Ed.]. Bruce really enjoyed it. The National Stadium is a bit of a dive but it does not lack intimacy or atmosphere.

So how could a sold out, outdoor show in a horse show-jumping arena match the previous evening? These were my sentiments on that warm Thursday evening as I left a local pub and ventured with 30,000 others to the RDS. The previous week had seen so much rain in Dublin that all weather records had been exceeded since such records were first kept. But now, thankfully, the sun emerged for Bruce. The 33 song show (another error in your report!) from the opening acoustic set to the closing "It's Alright" will remain the greatest show this small island has seen.

We were all drained when Bruce reappeared after "Light of Day" with Joe Ely (who had deferred his departure plans to return Bruce's favor from the previous evening) and blasted into a brilliant "Settle for Love." An electric "Born to Run" and a superb "My Beautiful Reward" (with Bruce now bathed in the orange footlights of the quickly darkening evening) concluded. I think we all felt that that was it and prepared to scream for a further encore when Bruce mentioned that he had a surprise for us. No sooner had the roadies wheeled a piano into place and Bruce introduced Jerry Lee Lewis than we were off into "Great Balls of Fire." An ecstatic crowd was now whipped into a frenzy. Before launching into "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," Jerry Lee told the crowd how he had enjoyed the show and how wonderful Bruce's performance, and indeed that of the entire band, had been. No one disagreed. Bruce treated us to four more songs, but not before he told us of his excitement at jamming with one of his heroes. He assured us that he wouldn't sleep that night.

I apologize for going on but I was disappointed to see your tour report gave less column space to the Irish show than to any other on the tour, especially when it was probably the cream.

Brian Leahy
Dublin, Ireland

FROM SMALL THINGS

Dear Editor:

I just saw 19 shows in nine cities but I have to say, the NJ/Philly fans are the worst Bruce fans by far. When Bruce sang "Satan's Jewel Crown" for the first time in the States at Brendan Byrne, you couldn't even hear the song for all the people talking during the music. 19,000 Jersey fans hearing Springsteen do a new song and what do they do? Hit the bathroom, go get a beer, or engage in conversation with the people next seat over! But you know they go ape when they hear "Glory Days" or "Born in the USA," don't you? These "fans" would rather hear something bad that they know than hear a good song! Go figure. Hey Bruce, do yourself a favor next tour (acoustic, please!) and skip Jersey and Philly. Spend more time with your true fans in the Washington, D.C., area.

I wish Bruce would have mixed it up a bit when he played the smaller markets. Except for the Meadowlands, it was pretty much the same shows from Tacoma to Lexington. Why do "Jersey Girl" only in Philly and Jersey? I know a bunch of real fans from Chapel Hill to Cleveland who would die to hear that tune one night. And they never will unless they get to Bruce's East Coast neighborhood.

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Bruce played with Clarence this summer and once again pulled out "From Small Things." Why hasn't he ever played this at one of his shows? I know it isn't his best song, but it sure is better than "Light of Day" or "Working on the Highway." He always sings this song for the barflies but paying customers aren't good enough to hear it.

It was good to hear "This Hard Land" finally. Can you imagine *Nebraska* with that song on it? Wow! Why did it take ten years to find it—who knows. If Fogerty had written it, Bruce would have done it at every show the last decade. Now if we can get "Frankie" out of the vault, I'll be happy.

Joe Schwind
Falls Church, VA

TALK TO ME

Dear Editor:

I'm 18 years old and have been an avid Springsteen fan since I was nine. I was at both of Bruce's recent benefit shows and wanted to comment specifically on the second concert at Madison Square Garden. As a benefit for the Kristen Ann Carr fund, this show was very personal for Bruce, and when he told the crowd that night that there was no place he would rather be, it came straight from the heart. He explained to us that we were not to mourn for Kristen's loss, but to celebrate her memory. And what a celebration it was! But the spirit of the night was ruined when fans (if you can call them that) began to boo Bruce's guest singer, Terence Trent D'Arby. My heart sank as I listened to the rude, selfish audience surrounding me. I couldn't believe these were Springsteen fans. They had absolutely no class.

Despite these complete morons, Bruce continued to play. But as I watched (through my binoculars) Bruce's facial expressions as he gazed out into the crowd, I could tell he was disappointed in his fans. This was particularly upsetting for me and other fans like myself who admire and respect him so much. I only hope that Bruce (and Terence) will never again experience such a rude audience.

Erin Feinberg
Long Island, NY

BOUGHT THAT TICKET

Dear Editor:

I will bet that this is not the first letter about the concert at Madison Square Garden in New York on June 26. I also hope that Bruce fans will continue to voice their anger at the rudeness of the concert-goers (not fans) who so rudely booed during Terence Trent D'Arby's appearance. I am sure that a lot of people were expecting members of the E Street Band to show up. I am sure that it would have been great if they did, but to boo another performer because they thought Bruce said "Clarence," not "Terence," is just rude.

My ticket said "Bruce Springsteen," and he and his great band showed up. Anyone else showing up was an extra treat. Terence, Joe Ely, and Soozie Tyrell were all great.

I'm also ashamed that Bruce could be doing a great song like "Follow That Dream," and all I heard around me was "'Rosalita,' do 'Rosalita.'" I thought "Follow That Dream" was a perfect end to the show and tour. Bruce doesn't have to rock out to be great.

Paul Skeen
Tinton Falls, NJ

BE TRUE

Dear Editor:

This is an open letter to Bruce Springsteen to please *not* release a retrospective box set. As we saw with the first box set (*Live 1975-85*), trying to re-sequence the original albums led to groups of songs that worked together, but a lack of cohesion in the final product.

The preferred option would be to release an entire concert or better yet, a series of concerts which show the growth and maturation of your music. If economic reality dictates that a "retrospective" box is released instead of an entire concert, please model the set after the Dylan series and include mostly unreleased material. Gems like the acoustic version of "The Fever," and the entire John Hammond demo are of infinitely more value than a recycled "Greatest Hits" package.

Jon Poklop
Prospect Heights, IL

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These officially-licensed tourbooks are out-of-print and have been unavailable anywhere since they were sold exclusively at Springsteen concerts. Essential items and great gifts for any Bruce fan. *ORDER EACH EDITION SEPARATELY OR TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A SPECIAL SAVINGS BELOW AND ORDER ALL FOUR TITLES!*

This 32-page color program features stunning color photos of Bruce on stage and off, taken by Neal Preston, Annie Leibowitz, and others. Excerpt from Bill Flanagan's *Musician* story from May of 1992. Profiles on each of the new band members. Glossy covers, matte pages. A gorgeous edition. It's a memento any Springsteen fan will appreciate. Available in the US exclusively through Backstreet Records.

WORLD TOUR '92-93 $15

The beautiful 24 page tourbook sold at shows on the *Tunnel of Love* tour is available exclusively in the US through Backstreet Records. This lavish, oversized book contains dozens of striking color photos of Springsteen and the band, along with the lyrics to the LP (including "Roulette") and Bill Barol's excellent feature on *Tunnel* from *Newsweek*, November 2, 1987.

TUNNEL OF LOVE $15

Sold only on the 1984 tour (St. Paul through Syracuse), this book is a full-color chronology of Bruce's career up to the beginning of the tour. Oversize red and white "jumping shot" cover, stunning on and off-stage photos unique to this program, band bios, and overall a gorgeous piece that any fan will appreciate.

BORN IN THE USA 1984 $15

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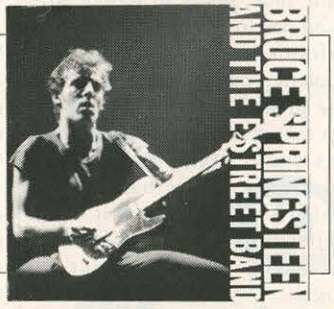
THE RIVER $15



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A Moment When the World Seems Right

My Father's House

By Jonathan B. Pont

My father came from a time before rock 'n' roll, a time when some things were left unspoken. Despite being from what he generally referred to as "the old school" (and I would never argue this point with him), he did the best he could to verbalize his feelings, especially if he felt strongly about something. I always expected a token of his approval after we talked, a reminder of sorts that he cared.

Such was the case with my fanaticism for Bruce Springsteen. Early on, my dad didn't seem to pay much attention, no doubt in part due to my sister's teen thing for Shaun Cassidy some years before. But eventually, he realized the role that Bruce's music played in my life during that long, somewhat isolated time I spent growing up in Castro Valley, a suburb of San Francisco. My dad made plans to see Bruce in 1985, but bowed out at the last minute to tend to a sick patient.

When he and my mom got tenth row center seats for the *Tunnel of Love Express* tour (5/3/88, no less), I was relieved that my dad would finally get to experience what I had tried to tell him about for so long. I was in Ireland at the time, going to school and trying not to think about missing performances of "Be True" and "Roulette," comforted by a somehow greater reward of my parents taking in what would be the best show of the tour, even bringing a picnic basket and making a real date out of it. I got a letter from my dad in Dublin, discussing the experience at length. "I would have never inferred," he wrote, "from brief TV shots or the noisy renditions from tapes (which floated up the hall toward my bedroom), the ability of this man, his group, and the performance to create sustained stimulation of the senses, the viscera, the psyche, the entire individual." He mentioned the topic again when I returned home, then left the memory to settle into the mists of time. But I waited for the token, some secret sign that he was still distilling the experience.

That summer, he sent me a photo that, for all its cheesiness, spoke for itself. It was a picture of my dad and a life-size cardboard cut-out of Bruce, taken at some hole-in-the-wall in Manhattan. I thought it was hilarious, but I knew that it symbolized his approval of the role that Springsteen's music played in my life, and the changes I had undergone: deciding that going overseas was a higher priority than seeing Bruce, and moving away from home permanently.

Most changes in life are brought on by external factors, events, and even expectations that are largely beyond our control. When my father died in March of 1992, I was at the mercy of a new momentum in my life that propelled me in directions I was unfamiliar with and certainly not comfortable either facing or discussing. But now, 18 months after his death, I've begun to capitalize on that momentum—harnessing it, if you will, and using it as a starting block for changes that I want to make for myself. Although that sort of pro-active change has been difficult, I'm learning.

In the past two years, Bruce Springsteen has talked a lot about change in his music, in print, and at his shows. And to a great extent, he has put his money where his mouth is without being boring or preachy. He grew secure with himself to the point where the commercial drop-off in his career didn't get to him the way it would to most people who reach that nearly-ridiculous level of fame. I think in his heart of hearts, he probably felt relieved. As I see it, that change was the easy part, like crossing the desert. Now, it seems like Springsteen must climb the proverbial mountain. As much as I enjoyed what he did this time around, Bruce clearly ought to let his music evolve.

Springsteen needs a blockbuster record, a la Neil Young's *Freedom*, Bob Dylan's *Oh Mercy*, or even Billy Joel's *River of Dreams*. All of these artists reached new critical zeniths with these works and I know Springsteen has got it in him to make a great single album. To achieve this, Springsteen should bring in a new producer, someone who will challenge him artistically, punch for punch. Listening to the last two records makes me think that a T-Bone Burnett or a Daniel Lanois could bring out elements in Springsteen's music that his current production team can't. When Springsteen chose to work with musicians other than the E Street Band, reasonable fans welcomed it as a move laden with possibilities. The two records had their moments ("Cross My Heart," "The Big Muddy," and "My Beautiful Reward" come to mind), but the production lacked cohesion. Why the control room personnel aren't subject to the same scrutiny as those making the music only robs Springsteen of the growth he seeks.

And if Springsteen wisely elects to work with a new producer, why not stick to an ambitious production schedule? One only need point to *Nebraska*, *Tunnel of Love*, *Lucky Town*, and even the unreleased masterpiece *The Ties That Bind* to realize that Springsteen's studio talents are best utilized in a shorter period of time. Get in there and bang 'em out, Bruce! The proof is in the pudding. Dave Marsh recounted in his first biography that Jon Landau told Bruce that "it's time to put the record out" after he had worked on *Born to Run* for not even *one year*. That record was by far Springsteen's most complex undertaking, save for perhaps the *Nebraska* mastering nightmare. In fairness, the problem in 1975 was Springsteen's difficulty in getting the right sound; in the case of, say, *Human Touch*, it was coming up with the right songs to match the themes Springsteen wanted to explore. Regardless, I can't understand why these marathon studio sessions persist. While it may be source of frustration for fans, it is a disservice to his art.

The next record should play a greater role in shaping Springsteen's next tour. For Springsteen to craft a show that doesn't draw on *Born in the USA* for substantial parts of the show requires either a record with broad appeal or a significant paring of his audience, something which I can hardly speculate about how Springsteen feels. It's difficult to fathom how this tour came and went without Springsteen coming out after "Light of Day" to sit at Roy's keyboard for solo versions of "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out" and "Real World." Springsteen obviously feels compelled —perhaps obligated—to play "Bobby Jean" and "Working on the Highway" to please *some* segment of the crowd. Why he would rather *please* them than *move* them is a mystery.

Bruce has demonstrated his capacity for change and discussed his desire to do pretty much whatever he wants, much as Young and Dylan have done recently. Each has shown a willingness to break with the myths that have been created about them by the strange vehicle of pop culture and the expectations that we have placed upon them.

And as I consider my future, that's something that I struggle with, too: how to make fundamental changes regardless of past accomplishments and of others' expectations—especially those of people I'm close to. I think often of my dad's seemingly innocent musing one day as we visited, not long before he passed away. "I think you'll write," he offered. Although it doesn't drive me, I still wonder whether he was referring to my aspirations or his expectations (my guess is a healthy dose of both). And one of these days, I'm going to sit down and figure it all out.

THE NEWS

Mr. Rock and Roll

Bruce plays final *Late Night*

After David Letterman showed old clips of his attempt to deliver a fruit basket to General Electric executives and admitted that he will miss "that vague, non-specific sexual tension" between him and Garrick Utley, he introduced a surprise guest. In his last minutes on NBC, he said, "I believe, honestly, in about 11½ years that we've been on this program, there is. . .really only one person who has not been on this show who I always really, really wanted as a guest. One person in 11½ years," he stressed. "And happily, all of that changes here tonight, ladies and gentlemen. So, better late than never, please welcome Bruce Springsteen." With that, Springsteen strode onto the stage, guitar in hand, and launched into an outstanding version of "Glory Days" with Paul Shaffer and the World's Most Dangerous Band.

What some Springsteen fans might consider a tired song was given new energy in this context, as Springsteen paid tribute to Letterman's successful run on NBC and ended the show on an incredibly high note. Bruce was in top form, beaming and motioning band members to share the microphone. Toward the end, Bruce and Paul shared an amusing exchange regarding the move to CBS: "Keep on rockin', boys. . .you're movin' on up. . .gonna have a bigger bandstand (yeah!). . .your own dressing room (yeah!). . .free beer (yeah!). . .a raise (no. . .)."

The night also saw Springsteen paired for the first time with longtime *Late Night* guest David Sanborn, who joined in on sax. The performance climaxed with Bruce hammering away at his guitar atop Shaffer's keyboard. The crowd responded wildly to Springsteen's performance, with hoots and whistles persisting as Bruce and Dave shook hands. "If I had known that," said Letterman, "I would have gotten on the piano years ago."

The performance seemed to be a tremendous thrill not only for the audience, but also for the band members and the host. "Thank you very much," Letterman said in a rare moment of sincerity, "It's a terrific thrill for me, I really can't tell you how much this means to me. Good to see you." Of course, he quickly turned to the camera, tongue planted firmly back in cheek, and quipped, "Hey, *I am* Mr. Rock and Roll, aren't I?"

In an interesting footnote to Springsteen's appearance, Letterman showed a clip of the post-show gathering from his final NBC appearance on the September 10 installment of the *Late Show* on CBS. Movie critics Siskel and Ebert were the guests, and Letterman surprised his guests, audience, and viewers when he played a tape of Siskel and Springsteen chatting after Bruce's performance.

Springsteen's appearance was a well-kept secret, but Letterman had alluded to a special guest all week long and even during the the final show.

It marked only the second time that Springsteen had performed on network television, joining with his 3-song performance with the new band on *Saturday Night Live* in 1992. Ironically, Tom Hanks hosted that episode of *SNL* and was a guest on the final installment of *Late Night* as well.

Scialfa: Live, on *Late Show*

Patti Scialfa marked the release of her debut record *Rumble Doll* with an acoustic showcase at the Fox Theater in Boulder, Colorado, on August 28. It was, in essence, her first solo public performance, one that focused entirely on her new album. Scialfa sang and played guitar, and was backed by Mike Campbell on guitar and slide; Soozie Tyrell and Lisa Lowell on violin and vocals; and Mark Goldenberg on guitar and keyboards.

The format was acoustic, with Scialfa seated most of the time. She performed eight songs in all, seven of which were culled from *Rumble Doll*. In the middle of the set, Scialfa played an unreleased song called "City Boys," which she claimed she wrote when she was a student at NYU. Scialfa appeared relaxed and confident, taking time between songs to chat with the crowd. Remarking on the oddity of the promotional radio tour circuit, she told the audience that "we play a song and then answer a bunch of weird personal questions, play another song and then answer even weirder personal questions. So, if you want to shout out questions between songs, it will make us feel more at home." Having just done a number of these radio shows, Scialfa admitted that this was the first time the songs were performed without such interruptions. When subsequently asked by a member of the audience whether she was married, she joked, "Yes, but my husband isn't here tonight."

Although the show was sponsored by *The Gavin Report*, a music industry publication, tickets were sold to the general public. Scialfa was on a bill that featured Rosanne Cash and Bruce Cockburn, both of whom are Columbia Records label mates. Earlier in the day, Scialfa performed on radio station KBCO in Boulder, continuing her "tour" of the FM airwaves.

On September 20, Scialfa played on the *Late Show* with David Letterman. Performing "Lucky Girl," Scialfa was backed by Mike Campbell and Paul Shaffer and the CBS Orchestra. Again, Scialfa sounded confident and played well. Letterman greeted her briefly afterwards, saying that he liked the record. In typical Letterman style, he introduced her by saying that Bruce Springsteen was his best friend.

the backstreets jukebox

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   Columbia (CD)
2. **Counting Crows**
   August and Everything After
   DGC (CD)
3. **Matthew Sweet**
   Altered Beast
   Zoo (CD)
4. **Paul Westerberg**
   14 Songs
   Sire (CD)
5. **Liz Phair**
   Exile in Guyville
   Matador (CD)
6. **Patti Scialfa**
   Rumble Doll
   Columbia (CD)
7. **Stevie Wonder**
   Innervisions
   Tamla (CD)
8. **Built to Spill**
   Ultimate Alternative Wavers
   C/Z (CD)
9. **Junior Brown**
   Guit With It
   Curb (CD)
10. **Urge Overkill**
    Saturation
    Geffen (CD)

10 Monster Discs to Play Today and Everyday

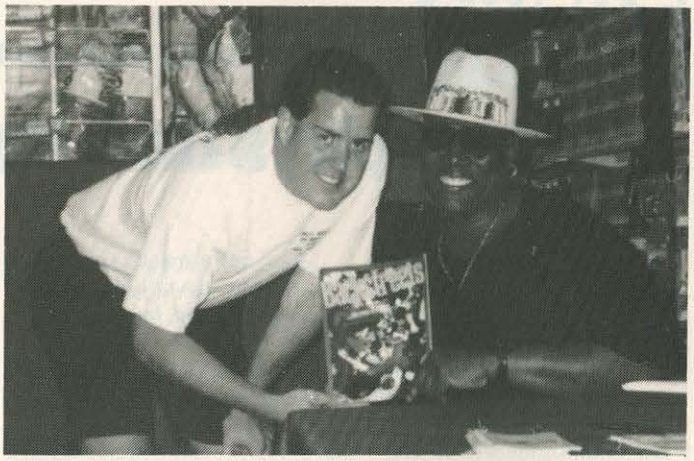
ON LIPS

BURNING LOVE: In yet another quiet act of philanthropy, Bruce Springsteen has provided two fire departments with better ammunition against the natural destructive force that rhymes with "desire." Springsteen donated $100,000 to the Freehold Fire Department for a new truck, and arranged for their old truck, emblazoned with the words "The Boss" above the grill, to be donated to the town of Paint Bank, Virginia. Several years ago, Bruce donated money for the conversion of an abandoned mill (perhaps "the textile mill, 'cross the railroad tracks"?) into a library. When the building burned down and Springsteen's check was returned to him, he forwarded it to the city, suggesting it be put to another use. Collectors take note: these fire trucks could prove to be the most expensive Springsteen collectibles.

LOVE'S GLORY: Columbia Records feted Patti Scialfa in July at a Manhattan restaurant to celebrate the release of her first solo effort, *Rumble Doll*. Springsteen and Scialfa arrived together, but one person in attendance said that Springsteen kept an "extremely low profile" throughout the evening. Little Steven also attended, as did Lisa Lowell, Soozie Tyrell, and Sony Music President Donnie Lenner. Scialfa also played a brief acoustic set on Vin Scelsa's radio show on WNEW in New York, as she did on several stations around the country. And *Rumble Doll* has been holding its own, receiving largely positive reviews from *Entertainment Weekly* and a very respectable three-and-a-half stars from *Rolling Stone*. Scialfa has also shot a video for the first single from *Rumble Doll*, "As Long As I (Can Be With You)."

E STREET SHUFFLE: NBC's *Late Night* returned to the airwaves on September 13 with not only a new host, Conan O'Brien, but also a new bandleader and musical director—none other than Mighty Max Weinberg. Max has appeared in public recently in support of the Big Brothers program, signing autographs and talking with fans. Perhaps as a result of his newfound employment, Max had to find a replacement for a series of Big Brother dates, and Clarence Clemons stepped in to take his place. . .*The Late Show's* first musical guest was Billy Joel, and if you watched carefully, you probably saw Crystal Taliafero singing background vocals. . . Tom Hanks, who hosted *Saturday Night Live* when Springsteen performed and also guested on the final installment of Letterman's NBC run, joked recently that "I take Bruce Springsteen with me everywhere I go." Too bad they didn't drop by the office when Hanks was in town filming *Sleepless in Seattle*. . .The Band covered "Atlantic City" on their recent tour, and when they played at the Garden State Arts Center in July, Clarence was there to add saxophone to "The Weight.". . . According to published reports, an obscure English band called the Rolling Stones offered E Street bass player Garry Tallent an audition. At press time, the Stones were recording but had not made public any decision regarding the position vacated by Bill Wyman. Tallent, meanwhile, contributed to Minneapolis singer-songwriter Paul Metsa's latest album, *Whistling Past the Graveyard*. . .Keyboards wiz Roy Bittan plays on the new Meat Loaf record, *Bat Out of Hell II* (no kidding). . .The Little Steven fanzine *Voice of America* has officially ceased publication. The last published issue of *VOA* was in 1989, and reasons cited for its demise include lack of time, money, and Little Steven news. Editor Desiree Jones is preparing a final issue which will be mailed to all subscribers before the end of the year.

MAN AT THE TOP: At Gary U.S. Bonds' show in Point Pleasant Beach on August 23, he not only played an assortment of songs written for him by Bruce, but also nominated his old friend for President. During his introduction to the Springsteen-penned "Out of Work," Bonds admitted, "I used to love this song until I got a job. I still don't care that much for Bush and I don't think I care that much for Clinton, either. . .I was broke there for a while and I say, 'Bruce for President.' He's the one who got me my money." Perhaps the voting public-at-large wouldn't go for it, but it would make for one hell of an inaugural ball. . . When Dave Pirner, frontman for Soul Asylum, was asked for the proudest moment of his life by 'zine *The Interrogator*, he first remarked that he didn't have much to be proud of. While we would tend to disagree with that, he recalled a compliment he once received: "Bruce Springsteen told me I had a soulful band, which I thought was kind of amazing. I just don't think I have a very soulful band, so it made me feel proud of the guys." . . .Link Wray's new CD, *Indian Child*, includes a tribute to Bruce entitled "It Was Elvis". . .One of our readers returning to the States from Fiji reports that Air New Zealand featured "Open All Night" on their "songwriters" radio channel. Quite a refreshing selection considering the number of widely-heard hits they could have chosen. . .Another reader tells us that Bruce is getting plenty of airplay in the SkyDome. Toronto Blue Jays Paul Molitor, Rob Butler, and Pat Borders all play tracks off *Lucky Town* as they come up to bat. . .It seems that the electronic media prefers Bruce as well, as Tom Snyder's show on CNBC uses "Man's Job" between segments, while Rush Limbaugh plays between snippets of "Roll of the Dice." Now, if Rush could only get it right *during* his segments. . .We know that Bruce Springsteen bootleg CDs are out there, but now we have heard of the first Springsteen song covered by someone else and included on a boot CD. The Waterboys occasionally played "Because the Night" in their set, but Mike Scott would also throw in lines from "Backstreets" into a Waterboys song called "Savage Earth Heart." A version of this song is on the KTS release *Born to be Together*, a single CD from a 1986 European tour soundboard. According to popular legend, Scott used to publish his own Springsteen fanzine called *Jungleland*. . .



JEFF NARDONE PHOTO

Clarence Clemons and Jeff are excited about winning the readers' poll.

I'M A ROCKER: Joe Ely may not be a fixture on the Jersey Shore, but it certainly didn't hurt his name recognition when he played at Bruce Springsteen's final two shows in New Jersey and New York. The two originally met when Springsteen rolled through Austin, Texas, on the *Born in the USA* tour in 1984. They played together for the first time this past May in Dublin on consecutive nights, then again in June on the East Coast, where they reprised Ely's "Settle For Love" and played two Woody Guthrie songs to boot. Remembering the time in Ireland, Ely told the *Asbury Park Press* that "Bruce was nice enough to do one of my songs. That's not always the case when you do a guest appearance with someone. Usually, it's the other way around." Ely was a guest at Springsteen's Rumson home, but Ely reports that the two didn't have much time for a stab at any sort of songwriting collaboration. Ely took Bruce to a record store in Manhattan one afternoon and reportedly bought him numerous folk and country CDs. Fans are encouraged to check out such classic Ely albums as *Lord of the Highway*, *Love and Danger* (which includes "Settle for Love"), *Dig All Night*, and our own favorite, *Live Shots*.

New releases from Tunkel, Kenn

Shore musicians form Weinberg Seven

By Robert Santelli

Drummer Max Weinberg is one E Street Band member who hasn't been sitting around idle the last few months. Though he kept things quiet in a business where secrets are meant to be shouted, Weinberg put together a band and won the music director's slot for the Conan O'Brien Show, NBC's newest late night TV talk show. Both the show and Weinberg's band, the Max Weinberg Seven, debuted on national television Monday, September 13.

How did Weinberg go from being a rock & roll drummer to the leader of a jazz-flavored, jump blues band that can be seen weeknights in living rooms across America?

"It took a lot of determination and focus," said Weinberg recently from his Jersey Shore home. "When I heard about the gig, I knew at once I wanted it. There haven't been many drummers who have led bands on television. We really worked hard to put together what I thought was the winning combination."

That "combination" includes guitarist-songwriter Jimmy Vivino from Weinberg's previous post-E Street band, Killer Joe, plus a pair of horn-playing Asbury Jukes, trumpeter Mark Pender and trombonist Richie "LaBamba" Rosenberg.

"This band came together so fast, but it's not like we've been doing this for years," Weinberg continued. "We're not playing rock & roll, either. This is a band much like the kind of band that Louis Jordan or Amos Milburn would have had back in the late '40s or early '50s. Yet, what we've done is really contemporize the sound and bring it right back up to date.

Not only is Weinberg playing the drums and leading the band, but he's also co-writing much of the material with Vivino. "This is a brand new area for me," Weinberg said. "But it comes pretty natural because I have good ears. And it's a good thing because songwriting is a very demanding art."

Weinberg added that he's so comfortable with his new position that he can compare it only to one other gig in his life. "It feels the same way it felt for me when I auditioned for Bruce and got to be the drummer in the E Street Band," Weinberg said, smiling. "I didn't think anything could top that feeling, but this comes close."

Two Jersey rockers have released albums recently that *Backstreets* readers ought to check out. The first one is from Bruce Tunkel, the former lead singer and guitarist for the now defunct band, the Red House. Tunkel, a longtime Springsteen fan, pays tribute to the Boss's influence on his debut solo album, *Last Chance Afternoon*. Released by a new indie label, Safety Net, the album contains 13 tracks, some of which have definite Springsteen-esque sounds running through them. If the title song's intro reminds you a bit of "Born to Run," well, according to Tunkel, it should.

"I indulged myself a little bit on that song," admitted Tunkel in a recent chat. "Bruce has always been one of my two biggest influences (the other is Dylan). In Red House, those influences kind of got buried. But this is my own record."

A good listen to *Last Chance Afternoon* will also turn up other influences. "Trust Yourself," for instance, could have been penned by Little Steven during his Disciples of Soul days. "A couple of friends said they sort of heard Van Zandt in that one," said Tunkel. "All I can say is that it wasn't a conscious attempt to base that song along those lines. It just happened."

But don't get the impression Tunkel is simply imitating his heroes. *Last Chance Afternoon* has a number of other hot tracks, namely "Stop Bringing Me Down," "Dance of Self-Redemption," and "Hope" that are pure Tunkel.

"I think the perfect record is one that contains original ideas as well as some takes on ideas you've drawn in from people you respect," Tunkel explained. "And that, I think, is what *Last Chance Afternoon* is really all about."

You can order a copy of the album by writing to Safety Net Entertainment, 51 Lafayette Road, Fords, NJ 08863.

The Jersey Shore's other Bruce: Bruce Tunkel, formerly of Red House

Longtime Jersey Shore rocker Sonny Kenn calls his first album, *Can't Stop Now!*, "the realization of a dream." For *Backstreets* readers unfamiliar with Kenn, most Jersey rock critics routinely refer to him as the "dean of the Shore's guitar players." Kenn might well have been the area's first local rock star. Back in the mid-'60s he fronted a popular band called Sonny & the Starfires. It included Vini Lopez on drums, before he became the first beat-keeper in the E Street Band.

Kenn had other locally acclaimed outfits such as the Wild Idea, but he never got the chance to make an album until now.

"You wait and watch other guys make records and you wonder when your chance will come," explained Kenn. "At times it got real frustrating, but I never lost interest in the music. As far as I'm concerned I'm as excited about playing and singing today as when I was 18." (Kenn is in his mid-40s.)

He and his band, which includes singer-wife Judy Lynn Rutledge, certainly rock with youthful abandon. The proof is all over *Can't Stop Now!*, a mix of blues, rhythm & blues, and roots rock. Recorded at Butterfield's Studio in Red Bank and produced by Kenn on his own SKB label, *Can't Stop Now!* includes such top-notch rockers as "I Wanna Quit My Day Job," "Faster, Faster," and "Dig the Dirt."

Kenn said that *Can't Stop Now!* is the kind of album he'd want to buy. "It's got everything I like about the blues and rock on it," Kenn continued. "I didn't rush through recording the album; I took my time. I wanted it to be a good reflection of who I am as a songwriter and musician."

Through Kenn has yet to line up a distributor for his album, he is selling copies at Jersey Shore gigs and via the mail. If you want one, write to him at P.O. Box 823, Belmar, NJ 07719. CDs are $16 and cassettes are $13. The price includes shipping and handling.

Jersey Shore tidbits. . .This summer Bon Jovi raised $100,000 for Midwest flood victims; the band donated $50,000 to the American Red Cross for relief efforts, while another $50,000 came from Bon Jovi fans. . .The Toms River-based punk-metal band, Godspeed is the latest Shore outfit to ink a major label deal. The quintet, whose demo tape was produced by Rachel Bolan, the bass player for Skid Row, signed with Atlantic Records in August. . .Texas rocker Joe Ely on performing with Springsteen at the Meadowlands in June: "It was just the nicest thing to get to spend some time with Bruce on his home turf. Getting up on stage with him at the Meadowlands and listening to the roar of the crowd welcome him home and feeling all that energy, man, it was an awesome experience. It's not something I'll soon forget."

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

DOUGLAS HEATH PHOTO

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN closes out the 1992-93 World Tour with two benefit concerts in NJ and NY

by Jonathan B. Pont

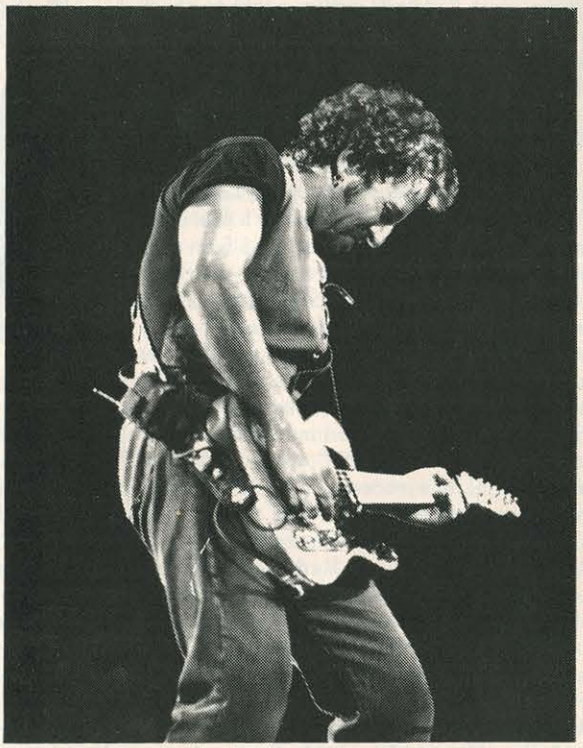
i feel like i'm coming home

And then there were two. After a little over a year, 102 concerts in 15 countries, Bruce Springsteen brought it all back home. The 1992-93 World Tour ended with two dates at New Jersey's Brendan Byrne Arena and New York's Madison Square Garden. Unlike past tours, when Springsteen would set up camp for a run of five to eleven shows per venue, fans had to settle for one concert in each arena. Beyond the obvious homecoming and end of the tour sentiments, these shows took on special significance. Both were benefits for charitable organizations. Springsteen is certainly no stranger to performing for worthy causes, and some of his most memorable concerts—A Night for the Vietnam Veteran in 1981, for example—have been benefits.

The first concert, billed as "The Concert to Fight Hunger," raised money for several food banks and relief organizations in New Jersey and New York. The Community Food Bank of New Jersey, the Food and Hunger Hotline, and the World Hunger Year each reaped more than $159,000 to further their efforts to eradicate hunger. It was a high-energy affair, punctuated by one-off performances, guest appearances by Joe Ely, Southside Johnny, the Miami Horns, and reunions with members of the E Street Band. The set list was tailor-made for the evening, starting with a solemn arrangement of "I Ain't Got No Home." Marking only the third time Springsteen has performed this Woody Guthrie song before an audience, he brought out Joe Ely, Tom Sims, and the background singers for an a capella gospel version. An acoustic set followed and included "This Hard Land" and other gems played on the '93 tour of Europe. The first set was standard, but Springsteen was in high gear throughout, turning in a great performance for the hometown crowd. "Satan's Jewel Crown," the Emmylou Harris song, made its US debut. Springsteen remained in good humor when he lost his boot during his "Leap of Faith" (after he was showered with "replacement" shoes from members of the audience, the boot was returned. A woman brought it up on stage, and Springsteen cheerfully sat down while she put it back on for him). Just before, Springsteen had called for "Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street," but saved it for later in the show.

The second set was another barnburner, with a particularly inspired "Because the Night" and a surprise "Living Proof," making its first appearance out of its usual spot in the first set. Sandwiched between "Souls of the Departed" and "Born in the USA," it made for yet another new twist, an emotional peak between two valleys. And if people were surprised by "Living Proof" in the second set, they were probably shocked by the performance of "Born in the USA." Springsteen offered up a version that left longtime fans shaking their heads, amazed by the delivery that transcended all others and gave the song a new life. Once again, Springsteen performed one of his signature songs without the element that made it so: the chorus was played, but Springsteen did not sing the lyrics. It was a stunning rendition.

The encore was another affair that not only seemed like it wouldn't stop, but also was made memorable by the people who joined in. Eleven numbers were played, and Bruce brought out so many guests that even he probably couldn't keep track. It started out with Joe Ely coming out for "Settle For Love," followed by Little Steven joining on "Glory Days." After "Thunder Road," Southside Johnny, Little Steven, and the Miami Horns came out to perform "It's Been a Long Time," seeming to put icing on the proverbial cake. But the horns stayed on, and without missing a beat, Bruce counted the band into "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out." And you do remember that line about making the change uptown, and then "the Big Man joined the band"? Well, the timing was perfect, as Clarence Clemons strolled out and blew his sax, creating a roar heard in Toms River (which is in part why most people couldn't hear his sax: the primary reason was a faulty microphone that cut off part of his solo). "I have never been to a Bruce show where the crowd was so loud," said Seth Gross of Woodmere, NY. "I thought the walls were going to come down." Next up was "Born to Run," which, emotion for emotion, equalled any high point on the entire tour. Springsteen held his microphone over Clarence's sax, lest any technical glitch render the moment mute, and the solo echoed through the halls of Brendan Byrne like the days of old. The encore also included a reading of Woody Guthrie's "Goin' Down That Road Feeling Bad" (another historical title is "Lonesome Road Blues"), which was a spur-of-the-moment inclusion. Despite the lack of rehearsal, Bruce gave everyone "an 'A' for effort." Max Weinberg joined the band for "Jersey Girl," then Bruce finished the set with Curtis Mayfield's "It's Alright." Little Steven, Southside, and the Miami Horns all sat in, ending the night on a very soulful note.



Springsteen cuts loose on "Lucky Town," 6/26.

Two nights later, fresh from his appearance on the final *Late Night with David Letterman*, Springsteen closed out the tour with a benefit for the Kristen Ann Carr Fund at Madison Square Garden. (Kristen Ann died of sarcoma in January and the fund was established in her memory to research the deadly form of cancer.) The concert raised more than $1.5 million for the fund, with special $1,000 Silver Circle tickets providing a hefty majority. Those with the Silver Circle tickets got preferred seating and passes to a pre-concert reception (Springsteen made only a brief appearance and, perhaps in keeping with the evening's mood, signed autographs only for children). Springsteen spoke of "my good friend" Kristen, noting that the purpose of the evening was not "to mourn her loss," but to "celebrate her memory." A lone bouquet sat close to Springsteen's microphone stand the whole evening.

That afternoon, Springsteen and Joe Ely hit a Manhattan record store. Going virtually unnoticed, the two loaded up on folk and country recordings, with Ely offering Springsteen a number of titles. If their tastes weren't evident to the cashier, they certainly were to the throng that packed the Garden. Springsteen debuted Woody Guthrie's "Lonesome Valley" in the opening slot on the 26th, with Ely and the singers helping Springsteen set the tone for the evening. The set list was a "model B" affair that featured ten songs not played at the Meadowlands. Of note was the acoustic "Blinded By the Light" to open the second set, the brilliant duets with Terence Trent D'Arby on "Jumpin' Jack Flash" and "Jole Blon" (last played 9/13/81, Cincinnati) and the acoustic version of "If I Should Fall Behind" with Soozie Tyrell on violin. Left off the original set list were "Born in the USA," "Thunder Road," and "My Beautiful Reward."

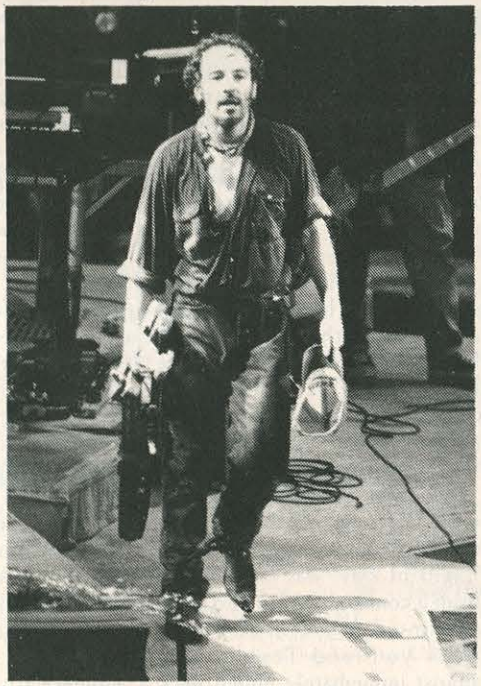
Regardless of the appeal this show will hold for Springsteen fans down the line, people will likely recall this show most not for the great music that was played, but for the ugly incident that accompanied Terence Trent D'Arby's performance of "I Have Faith in These Desolate Times." A chorus of boos greeted him not even a verse into the song. It was an embarrassment for Springsteen and fans alike. "I was ashamed to be at the show. . .hopefully, this won't tarnish the relationship with the overwhelming majority of his fans," said fan Chris Hall. Springsteen rose to D'Arby's defense, branding the culprits "rude motherfuckers."

Fans will remember these two shows for different reasons. The Meadowlands show was one of Bruce's longest shows ever, clocking in at well over three and a half hours. Springsteen played 35 songs, 11 of which were performed in the encore. He not only played a great set of the '92-93 song selections, but also surprised the audience with songs and guests that bridged his celebrated past with his current tastes and direction. Nearly ten songs either were new additions to the set or rearranged versions of older songs that hadn't been played to a paying house in the U.S. (excluding the Count Basie show last March).

The Garden show had its surprises, too, and for the repeat customer, the set list varied by 11 songs over that from the 24th. That's almost four times the number of additions over Springsteen's last back to back shows in the U.S. (Pittsburgh, 12/16/92, and Lexington, 12/17/92). Still, for the great moments this show reached, the D'Arby incident had a profound effect and controversy swirls about it to this day among fans.

In sum, these shows allowed some of Springsteen's U.S. fans—and those in his own back yard, no less—to get an idea of what the shows in Europe were like this past spring. Moreover, money was raised for charities and Springsteen delivered two powerful shows that were remarkably different in scope and emotion. Who could ask for more?

DEBRA L. ROTHENBERG PHOTOS



Top: with D'Arby; above: the end. 6/26.

6/24/93 E. RUTHERFORD, NJ

The Concert to Fight Hunger: I Ain't Got No Home/Seeds/Adam Raised a Cain/This Hard Land/Better Days/LT/Atlantic City/57 Channels/Badlands/Satan's Jewel Crown/My Hometown/Leap of Faith/Man's Job/Roll of the Dice//Does This Bus/Because the Night/Brilliant Disguise/HT/The River/Who'll Stop the Rain/Souls/Living Proof/BIUSA/Light of Day//Settle for Love/GD/TR/It's Been a Long Time/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/BTR/MBR/Goin' Down That Road Feeling Bad/Havin' a Party/Jersey Girl/It's Alright

6/26/93 NEW YORK, NY

The Concert for the Kristen Ann Carr Fund: Lonesome Valley/Darkness/Mansion on the Hill/This Hard Land/Better Days/LT/Atlantic City/57 Channels/Badlands/Many Rivers to Cross/My Hometown/Leap of Faith/Man's Job/Roll of the Dice//Blinded by the Light/Settle for Love/Because the Night/Brilliant Disguise/HT/The River/Souls/Who'll Stop the Rain/I Have Faith in These Desolate Times/Jole Blon/Light of Day//Jumpin' Jack Flash/If I Should Fall Behind/BTR/GD/Rockin' All Over the World/BJ/Follow That Dream

6/29/93 SEA BRIGHT, NJ

w/Clarence Clemons and the Red Bank Rockers/Tradewinds: Rockin' Pneumonia and the Boogie Woogie Flu/From Small Things/Jersey Girl/Glory Days/Twist and Shout

LETTERS

Bruce, his fans, and freedom of choice

The Price You Pay

Bruce Springsteen has always been a prisoner...[as] the '80s fell away to the '90s he became a prisoner of his own audience and impact...The audience's bond with Springsteen was obviously more than musical; it was uncomfortably messianic, a psychic escalation of the artist-audience relationships of the '60s which were profoundly personal and communal, where the identity of an artist was more than image and something we can only call presence, and in which the audience always wound up taking more from the artist than it returned, unless you think mass adoration and millions of dollars are a big deal. —Steve Erickson, *LA Weekly*, April 3-9 1992.

I was there June 26 at Madison Square Garden when the audience booed Terence Trent D'Arby, I've since heard the tapes —and I still can't explain it.

The physical record doesn't adequately represent how that moment felt either from my place in the stands or as I imagine it must have felt on stage: the sudden and inexplicable expression of resentment from a formerly hospitable audience toward D'Arby as he sang (beautifully) "I Have Faith in These Desolate Times."

The moment *felt* like a shocking,irreversible breach of etiquette. What was behind it? Simply the audience's palpable need for more Bruce at that moment?

The concert was definitely a memorial, marked by a specially printed program which explained the need for a permanent endowment fund. At the outset, Springsteen said, "we're here tonight for the Kristen Ann Carr Fund. Kristen Ann was my good friend—and the daughter of my good friend—who died recently from a sarcoma cancer that not much is known about. We're here tonight, we're going to be raising some funds, so we can hire a doctor to study that thing full time. I want to thank you all for your help, and tonight, it's not so much that we're here tonight to mourn her loss, we're here to celebrate her memory...and all those who are there tonight and out there struggling against this disease everyday."

Thirty minutes into the set, after a stunning "Badlands," Bruce thanked us again. "Kristen, I knew her since she was a little girl, [I'd] see her at all the shows and everything, she used to come and see me around...and she had a fella that whenever she talked about, she'd get all flustered—*I* was kinda like the old dog around the house. I'd like to bring out a special guest, he flew all the way from England just to be here tonight, a good friend of mine, Mr. Terence Trent D'Arby. He's going to help me do this."

Springsteen's soulful duet with D'Arby on Jimmy Cliff's "Many Rivers to Cross," backed by the choir, was received with cheers and excited applause. "Terence Trent D'Arby!" Bruce said when D'Arby exited the stage, "He's going to be back later on—old magic man."

Well into the second set, at Bruce's second introduction—"All right, I'm gonna bring out Terence Trent D'Arby, come on out, Terence!" The audience cheered again. But it was also then, as D'Arby sang solo at Bruce's mike, that a round of booing became audible for several seconds before being overwhelmed by determined clapping and cheering from others in the audience.

The character of the evening was immediately disrupted. I was so shocked I hardly remember the rest of the song. When D'Arby left the stage after "Jole Blon," Bruce said pointedly, "Need I remind some of you *rude* motherfuckers that everyone on stage is my guest!"

I've seen Springsteen angry with the audience before, but that night his fury was sustained. "Light of Day" was transformed from a communal tease into what amounted to an instrumental "fuck you" and Terence was almost immediately pulled back onstage—right in the audience's face—to deliver screaming lead vocals on a furious, raucous version of "Jumping Jack Flash."

I haven't found much refuge in the fact that I was not one of those people who "Bruced" or "booed" that night. On the one hand—possibly from the Steve Erickson point of view—the benefit can be seen as another moment of high irony in the continuing tragic-comic relationship of Bruce with his core audience. The moment also affected something I have been dying to see for the whole of the World Tour: we kicked Bruce back into a more appropriate feeling of seperateness from his audience, away from needing to please *us*.

For me, the big surprise of my first shows on the World Tour in Europe last year was just that—after two decades, Springsteen still managed to retain such a genuine sense of optimism about his core audience. The tour was marked by his particular enthusiasm this time out to play just about anything we wanted to hear—he even added "Born to Run" back into the encores by request!

I don't know that I consider myself exempt from those booing idiots. They are just as much a part of Bruce's audience as I am—for in another way, I've been guilty of trying to impose *myself* on the set list, too. This tour I wanted to hear *new* material played by a *new* band. So the prejudice I brought to the World Tour shows was an inability to appreciate *Born in the USA*. Yet, almost immediately on this tour, with a cutting, breathtaking acoustic revision of "Dancing in the Dark," Springsteen's overreaching of his own body of work recuperated many of those songs for me.

It seems to me that however much "we," within our self-proclaimed status as his "old" fans, hunger for Bruce's charisma and stage presence, there may be many ways that we fail as an audience to respect the choices he makes as an artist. We project our own needs upon Bruce to the extent that we may fail to recognize that those choices are *his* prerogative to make. We are so familiar with his body of work, we see it as our special prerogative to limit his choices.

Take the general assumption that somehow the audience's act of discourtesy that night was Springsteen's responsibility for putting D'Arby in a ballad at that point in the show. Bruce deserves the freedom of choice, especially from us. When we fail to acknowledge his prerogative to play whatever he wants—with whomever he needs to, we adopt a position which with a little more reflection most of us would probably find insupportable.

Is it because Bruce chooses to practice as a pop artist, in a commercial arena, that we feel he should surrender his freedom of action to us? Do we feel it's our right as consumers to try to direct his artistic choices? Yet how many of us would suggest to a visual artist what he or she should or should not paint or exhibit?

If I think of the freedom of choice that Bruce's music has helped me to aspire to in my own life, and to achieve, since I first memorized the words to "Thunder Road," I feel I do owe him a debt. It's a debt of a different currency besides cash—it's a feeling of gratitude incurred in the act of receiving an unexpected but now highly valued gift.

I wonder if the only way as a fan that I can repay Bruce that particular debt now, while he's alive and working and performing, is to allow him that freedom of choice. Surely it can't be so difficult to pause, keep the peace in an intimate moment, and give him a chance to unfold the magic. For all that we have received from Bruce, that pause, that moment of appreciation, seems hardly too high a price for any of us to pay.

—Demetra Christakos, Editor, *Rosie* fanzine

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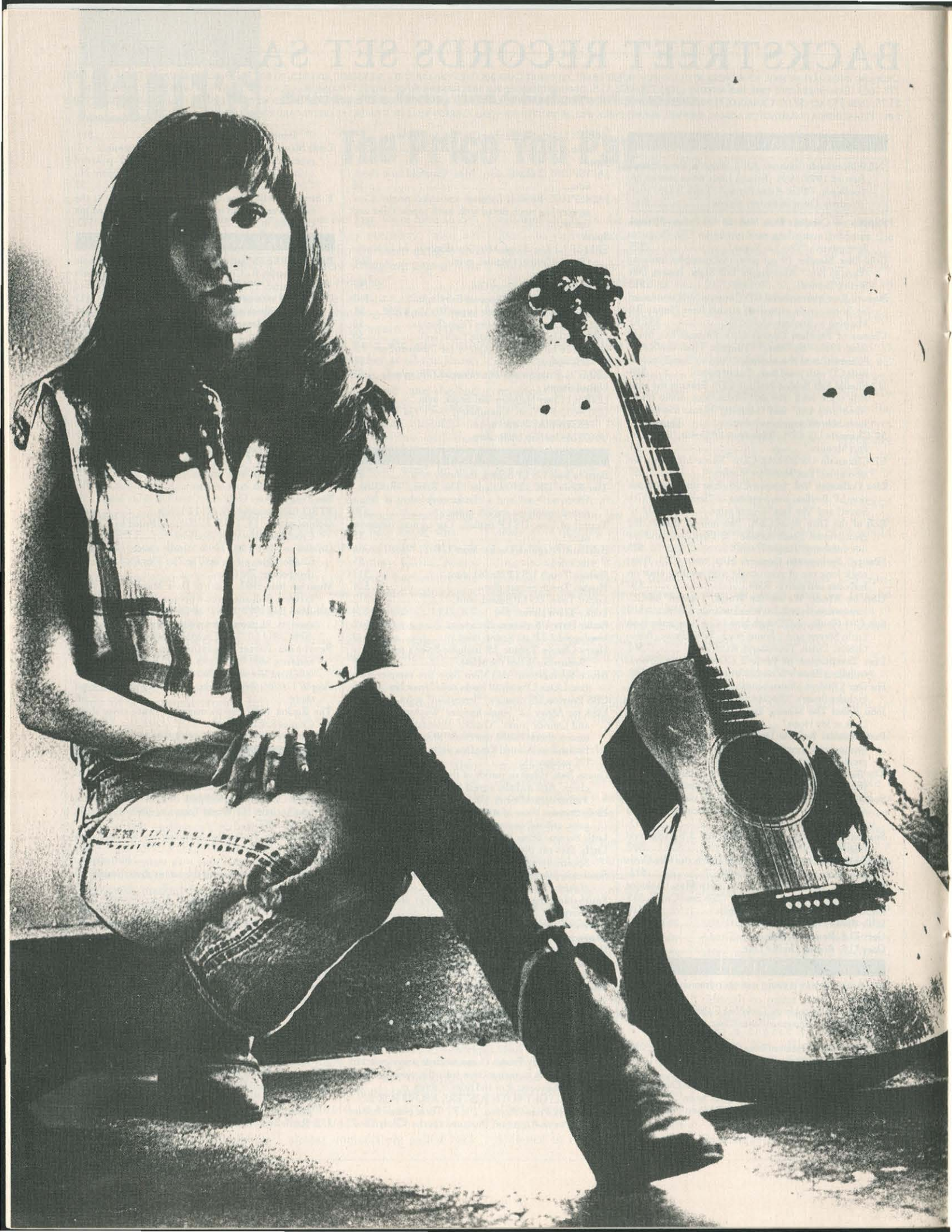


Lucky Girl

The *Backstreets* Interview with Patti Scialfa

By Robert Santelli

The Hook, Line & Sinker is the type of restaurant you'd expect to find in Rumson, New Jersey. Its ambiance is casually upscale, and you get the immediate impression that it's a good place to make business deals over lunch or have a bite to eat after a midday tennis match.

There is a TV on, but the volume is turned off to make chatting more comfortable. Other bars and restaurants along the Jersey Shore are tuned into the Yankees game since they're playing an important contest with the Blue Jays this summer Sunday afternoon. But on this TV, it's golf that fills the screen.

Most everyone is at the beach today, however a few Yuppie couples sit at the tables and drink imported beer or sip white wine. Some of the men wear loafers with no socks and Ralph Lauren polo shirts and shorts. The women have on pretty summer dresses that go past the knee.

Located on the Jersey Shore, Rumson is only ten miles north of Asbury Park, but the Hook, Line & Sinker seems like a million miles away from Asbury's most famous rock club, the Stone Pony—which is why this Rumson eatery is an ideal location in which to interview Patti Scialfa. Who would expect her to be in a place like this talking about rock & roll on such a gorgeous day?

But there could be a problem here. Most celebrities, when they're being interviewed in a public place, prefer to blend into the landscape to increase their chances for privacy and not be noticed by giggly fans. Patti Scialfa has no Laura Ashley dress on. From head to toe, she wears rock & roll black. She gets some curious glances, but there are no autograph seekers to hound her. We get a table that's tucked away in a corner of the restaurant and order something to drink.

Patti is in a particularly good mood. Not a week ago, her debut solo album, *Rumble Doll*, was released and the first reviews are good, even glowing. Minutes before coming to the Hook, Line & Sinker, she was rehearsing with her new band at home, located not five minutes from the restaurant, while husband Bruce watched the children.

"Things are happening so fast," she says, working her hand through her thick, beautiful red hair. "This record took years to do, and now suddenly we're moving like there's no tomorrow."

There is, after all, a reason for this. Patti is pregnant again; she's due in January. There is no time to waste if she is to promote her album, put a band together, and maybe do a small showcase tour of clubs. Tomorrow she leaves for the West Coast and more interviews and stops at radio stations.

"It's kind of fun," she says sipping a tomato juice. "We're doing a lot of press and radio things. People are asking interesting questions."

There were no pre-determined conditions imposed on me before meeting with Patti as to what I could ask her and what I couldn't. But clearly Patti wants to talk about her album. And why not? There is plenty to talk about, so we get started right away.

Backstreets: *It seems as if* Rumble Doll *took forever to be released. Why did it take so long to complete?*

Scialfa: Well, I got my record deal in 1986, but it wasn't until 1987 that I actually signed the contract. There was so much red tape. I was going to start the record just before the *Tunnel of Love* tour, but then, of course, Bruce called and said, "Do you you want to go out on the road and tour with me and the band?" He said it would only be a six month tour, so I figured I would go. Well, I did the tour, which led into the Amnesty International tour, and then Bruce and I got involved romantically. It was such a windfall of emotion that I just wasn't ready to go into the recording studio and begin work on the album. I got a lot of attention with all that had happened, and much of it I really didn't feel comfortable with. Plus, the songs I wanted to put on the album were very personal, and I thought, "Gee, if I put out an album now, I just don't know if I can handle exposing myself any more than I had." So I took a couple of years off, and Bruce and I put our relationship together.

I assume you began work on the album in or around 1989?

Yeah, in 1989. That's when I started to work with Mike Campbell from Tom Petty's band. He is such a great producer.

Did you know him prior to working with him?

No, I really didn't. I didn't know anyone from that camp. Someone told me that he wanted to produce records and I thought that was great because he was coming from a completely different situation than the one I was coming from. Mike has a completely authentic type of sound, which I love.

A lot of people think you got you're record deal because you're, well, Mrs. Springsteen. But you say you got your deal before you two became romantically linked.

That's right.

Can you sum up how your record deal came about?

Sure. During the *Born in the USA* tour there was one period in which we had about a month off. Well, I took the money I made and used the time to cut a really nice six-song demo. After the tour was over I hired a lawyer to shop the tape to

NEAL PRESTON PHOTOS

record companies. She shopped it around, and from the demo, CBS gave me studio time to make another demo. After they heard it, they signed me. This happened around six or seven months after the tour stopped. And then, like I said, the deal took a long time to finalize, I guess because it wasn't a priority or anything like that. (laughs)

Who did you make your demos with—E Street Band members or other Jersey Shore musicians?

No. See, when I graduated from Asbury Park High School, I went to the University of Miami to study music. There was a guy down there by the name of Cliff Carter; he plays with James Taylor now. I made a lot of demos with him, and I'd drop them off at record companies, just like everyone else was doing. But then I moved to New York in 1972-73 and lived there until Bruce and I moved to California. Though I knew a lot of people from the Shore, I never really worked with them on their home turf. I mean, I was up in New York singing when the thing happened with Southside Johnny and the Jukes. I had gone to high school with Billy Rush (at the time, the Jukes' lead guitarist). One day he called me up and said the band needed some vocals on the new album they were working on. He asked me if I wanted to do some singing and I said yes if I could bring my friends Soozie Tyrell and Lisa Lowell, because we really had a nice sound together. So we sang on the album (*Love Is A Sacrifice*, 1980) and then toured with the Jukes.

"I never intended to become a backup singer. It was something that came along."

You also sang with David Sancious's band, Tone.

That's right. I met David up in New York through my friend Michael Narada Walden. Michael used to be down at the University of Miami too. He was a drummer in bands that I used to sing in down in Florida. When he was doing his solo records, before he became a producer, he had Davey play on one of his records and had me sing on it. I was in the studio the same day Davey was there; Davey heard me sing and asked me to join his band. You know, it really is weird how I worked with so many Shore musicians in so many different places other than the Shore. (laughs)

Let's get back to Rumble Doll. *Were all the songs on the album written in one particular period? Are there songs on it that were also on your original demo?*

Most of the songs were written from 1986 or '87 on. One song, "Valerie," I had for quite a long time. I used to do "Valerie" at Kenny's Castaway in New York. Back then it had a different melody. But I always liked the story, so I updated it for the album. I gave it a new melody and changed some of the lyrics, but it really is an old song.

You worked on your album through two pregnancies. How did you manage?

I didn't work long hours. I'd work four or five hours a day. I took days off. Michael understood why I had to do it that way. He's married and has three kids, so he could relate to why I just couldn't go in and get the album done in one shot. When we first began working on the album, we were primarily based in a little garage with a home 24-track studio, analog. Later I transferred the tapes to digital to get everything organized. We went into a big studio in the end to do some vocals and put drums on the record. Mostly it was just the two of us, so when we brought in musicians, the songs were already formed.

Some early reviews of the record mention that some of the songs on Rumble Doll *have an early '60s "girl group" sound or feel. Are reviewers correct in saying that?*

I think so. On the record I borrow from some of my favorite artists. Dusty Springfield was one. I've always loved her big emotional feel. I borrowed a little of the girl group thing, more on the pop tunes than on the real internal songs. But basically I was more influenced by the classic style of songwriting from the singer-songwriter period of the late '60s and early '70s. People like Neil Young, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Laura Nyro. I love Laura Nyro. I love singers and songwriters who put forth a lot of emotion. I always wanted to make an album that had a lot of emotion on it. I remember when I was living up in New York and making demos for Atlantic, Warner Brothers, and Elektra—they all gave me like $3000 for studio time which was a lot of money for demos back then—the songs on the demos would all sound like they were influenced by these singer-songwriters.

You mentioned before that many of the songs on Rumble Doll *are very personal. There seems to be a confessional aspect to the album. Is there?*

Well, I've been writing songs for a long time and working hard to master the craft. When I was on tour with the Jukes, whatever money I made, I'd come back to New York and do gigs in the clubs there. That was always my main focus. I never intended to become a background singer. It was something that came along.

In David Sancious's band, Tone, you sang lead, didn't you?

Yes, I did. I did that for a couple of years. Gerry Carboy (bass) and Boom Carter(drums) were also in the band. They're such great musicians.

I had seen Tone perform on a few occasions in the '70s, but never with you fronting the band. In fact, outside of what you did with the Jukes and, of course, the E Street Band, the only time I ever saw you as the featured vocalist was during a Christmas show or New Year's Eve show at the Capitol Theater in Passaic, New Jersey.

Yes, I remember. The show was done live for a radio audience. I did "Love's Glory," a tune called "City Boys," and something else, probably some rock tune that I put together real quick. But I can't recall the date of that show. Can you?

Late '70s or early '80s is my guess.

You might be right, I don't know.

Now that Rumble Doll *is finished, are you thinking of going out on the road with your own band?*

I'm going to try to. I'm doing some radio things with Lisa and Soozie. When that's done, I'll get the band together and do some things, but I have to see what my energy level is like. I want to make sure I'm protective of the baby and everything. I'm due in January, but I've been really tired lately. Maybe we'll do some dates in September; I really want to try some of these songs out live. I think it's important for me to get up onstage a little bit. You know, we had some dates offered to us in August, but I couldn't say yes to them because it was just

too early. I wouldn't mind doing some clubs, you know. Then, hopefully, if the record does well enough and after the pregnancy is over, maybe we'll do a shed tour next year. But who knows? We'll just have to see how things go.

You selected the song "Rumble Doll" as the album's title track. Why?

I'm interested in the idea of dolls going from being precious to expendable. It's pretty interesting to expand that idea beyond dolls. I mean, a lot of women today fall into the category of being precious and then expendable. For me, the song is about a woman who doesn't fit into the acceptable image. The person in "Rumble Doll" is looking to be loved for the real things in her life, rather than the imagined things. In fact, that's a theme that runs through the entire album.

Don't you think the "Rumble Doll" theme holds true for men, too? Men are often perceived in a certain way and forced to live up to certain images.

Oh, definitely. Men go through the same kinds of pressures and things that women do. I'm not saying that this album is only for women because it deals only with women's issues. You know, there's that whole thing of the cartoonish version of masculinity that men have to deal with.

Is this a concept album?

I think so. The songs are thematically linked. "Rumble Doll" might be the one song that all the others evolve from. I'm really interested in the emotional transition from childhood to adulthood. I'm not necessarily talking about a chronological transition. You can have a kid's point of view for a long time. I think if you're an adult and you have children earlier than I did, you make that transition earlier.

How much of Rumble Doll *is autobiographical?*

That's a good question. (laughs)

A song like "Come Tomorrow," which, I presume, is about your early relationship with Bruce, took a lot of courage to write and especially include on the album.

You know, I was going to leave that song off the album. . . it took a long time for me to make a record and when I got that opportunity, I wanted to make sure I was truthful. In the end, I figured that if I was going to leave a song off the album, it was going to be because it wasn't as close to my emotional core as I hoped it would be. Ten years from now I want to be able to listen back at my album and recognize myself in it—without any intentionally deleted parts because I was frightened of the outcome. Even now when I look back at when I wrote songs, I see things. I mean, I can look back at "Rumble Doll" and see how confused and paralyzed I was at the time. So, to get back to your original question, (laughs) not everything is true on the album, but everything, I think, is truthful, if you know what I mean. There is a lot of fiction in the songs, but the emotional core of the album is full of truth.

Your husband is one of the best songwriters rock & roll has ever produced. Did you ever feel a sense of intimidation when writing the songs or making the album?

Bruce had always known my music. When we first started working together, I'd always play him my things. So we have this long-standing connection. But, of course, I was very aware that he's so well known and so respected for his songwriting, that when my record came out I was going to be viewed through his shadow in some capacity. For some people the shadow would be heavier; for others it would be less dense. I knew that because it's part of the turf. It's frustrating, but it's a small price to pay for all the great things in life that I have with Bruce. It's something that I think if I handle correctly and do good work that the shadow will eventually go away. That's why touring is important, because once you go out and play, it clears the air.

Does all this anger you?

No, it frustrates me. It's frustrating.

You could have had Bruce all over this record. Yet, his role is little more than a cameo.

I like my independence. (laughs) I would have worked alone, no matter what. It's better that way, you know, to have your own space, your own interests, your own individuality. I'm not talking just about music or the arts. But to be truthful, there were times when I wanted to hear a guitar and Mike wasn't there, and I know Bruce could have done it. But I was careful not to rely on that. Bruce played lead guitar on the tune "Big Black Heaven." But Mike played on the track, too. It gets kind of confusing because I wanted Bruce on the record because, well, I love him (laughs), he's my husband, and I love making music with him. But I didn't want to have too much of his presence on the album because it would just feed into the thing we were talking about.

Did you ask Bruce for advice on certain issues or things?

Sure. But sometimes I took his advice and sometimes I didn't. In the end, I followed my instincts. You have to if you want to keep your individuality. Bruce was very supportive through the project. Musically, he didn't want to undermine Mike. More than anything else, Bruce provided plenty of emotional support. He knew that making your first album is a real emotional experience. One day you think the album is great, another day you think it's the worst thing in the world.

"Sometimes I took Bruce's advice and sometimes I didn't. I followed my instincts. You have to if you want to keep your individuality."

We started this interview talking about how long it took you to complete Rumble Doll. *Will the second album take as long?*

Oh, God, no. I have part of my second record already written. I'd love to do the record a lot quicker, say in six months, if that's possible.

So there will be a follow-up album?

Oh yeah. My basic wish with this first album was to get my foot in the door and have it do well enough so the record company lets me do another one. I don't want to sound like Rodney Dangerfield, but I'd also like a little respect along the way, the kind that allows me to be myself and do my own music.

And what will Bruce do while you're pursuing your career? Will he become a rock & roll version of Mr. Mom?

(laughs) I don't think he likes that name. He's a great father, a great husband. He'll be there for me, and I'll be there for him.

GIOVANNI CANITANO PHOTO

HAVING TEA WITH

MS. T.

BY ERMANNO LABIANCA
PHOTOS BY GIOVANNI CANITANO

*(Adapted and edited from the book **Local Hero: Bruce, in the Words of His Band**, published in Italy by Great Dane Books. The book features interviews with all the new band members and some fabulous photographs by Canitano. Last issue, we excerpted Labianca's interview with Roy Bittan and this time around, Labianca has tea with Ms. T., for Taliafero.)*

I would never have expected her to be so punctual. Crystal Taliafero shows up at my appointment with a decisive walk and a smile that doesn't fade. The sliding doors of the luxury elevator close behind her and the hall of the London hotel where she's staying takes on the grey of the day outside, which is once again promising rain. It is July of 1992 and Bruce Springsteen and his band are in the middle of a sold out tour of Europe. But my thoughts on seeing Crystal T. again run back in time: a short Midwest country dress and a washboard in her hands for the tour with John Cougar Mellencamp; even more seductive on saxophone and percussion for Billy Joel's last tour; whilst not forgetting her performances with Joe Cocker, Julian Lennon and Bob Seger. One would expect her to be more disillusioned and cynical about the big rock 'n' roll world she's been living in for years. But no: everything—from the enthusiasm in her eyes to the urgency of the unexpectedly candid narrator with lots of secrets to reveal—makes her seem like a "first timer." She's beautiful, it's undeniable. She's like a perfect blend of the young Tina Turner and Ronnie Spector at the time of "Be My Baby." She's all in black from her leather jeans and her baseball cap down to her cowboy boots and talks about everything: her first encounter with Bruce, her love of music ("everything, but with the rhythm in mind"), and her aspirations. I heard she loves horses and Harley-Davidsons. Her black t-shirt says: "Remember the days when sex was safe and motorcycles were dangerous." She doesn't leave me much room to speak.

Anybody who sings "Like A Rolling Stone" as beautifully as you did when I saw you performing with John Cougar Mellencamp in Europe in 1988, deserves a solo career.

Thank you very much, thank you so much. I did take some steps that way, sure, though it's not easy. That's not what they expect in the business, in the States at least; I never tried it in Europe. But in the States it seems like they don't want a black person doing any rock'n'roll. A black female. My thing is rock'n'roll, because that's a lot of my background, but there's a lot of my roots, of my other roots, which is rhythm and blues, which has a lot of heavy beat to it. So I mixed the two together and they go like "We have four categories: which one do you fit in? We've got dance, we've rap, we've got pop and we have rock. Which one do you fit in?" And I wanna say! A little bit of all them".

And they say "no" I guess.

Exactly (laughs). That's what has been happening until last February, no, March! And then in April I did a showcase and that went really well; actually from April to May I was working on that and then all of a sudden I got a phone call: "Do you wanna come up for an audition with Bruce?" And I said, "Gee, I thought he got the band together already", ten days before the first live broadcast (the L.A. broadcast, on June 6, 1992, Ed). I said yes, of course!

A last minute call!

And I go "Yeah, but I don't know any of his music at all" and the girl on the phone said "Don't worry just come and have an audition". So I went out and as soon as I got off the plane I went straight to the appointment and fifteen minutes later here comes Bruce and Roy and I immediately auditioned right there. I was like (acts with a funny, scared expression): "Okay". Oh man, he was like, "play this, play that" (imitates Bruce teaching chords) Then he said (imitates Bruce's hoarse voice) "Okay, alright, alright" and he said "Can you hang around a few days and play with the band". I said "Suuure!" And I came to find out

later, from Zachary, that I was the only one that was auditioned who Bruce asked to stay and play with the band. said "This is a good sign", you know, "this is a good sign".

I said to Bruce (imploringly) "Let me do what I can, I'll do the best I can, it's all I can do". So we practiced for two days and then it was three days and four days. I was there for six days, you know and then finally he came up to me one day in rehearsal, everyday I'm like this, you know, with his book, reading, practicing and playing and he said, basically "Do you wanna stay? We wanna have you here to go on tour." I was so tired, you know, mentally stressed out. I was just trying to absorb everything, lyrics, chords, I was gonna play some keyboards but then we stopped doing that. It was just so much to learn–I didn't know if I had the job or not, but I tried to learn as much as I could. And if I didn't get the gig, at least, I was saying to myself "What an experience that was, what an experience". That was really awesome. I learnt so much in such a short period. So Bruce said "You basically have the job". And I said "Great, great!"

Let's go all the way back to Gary, Indiana. You're from there, right?

I was born in Massachussets but I was raised in Gary. I'm from Indiana, yeah. My father was in the service and he got out of the service, spent some time and then we all moved to Indiana. I was only six months old.

So you grew up there.

And I had my first band when I was 11. Actually, it was my brother's band and I didn't want to join the band because they were all boys, you know? What we played was Earth, Wind and Fire, Rufus and Chaka Khan and all that, rhythm and blues.

So you were in a band with your brother.

Yeah, we went to High School, Junior High and did a bunch of lunch-time theatres, playing for the schools in the area. Finally, I was gonna go to the service like my father, in the Air Force, or go to school. And my whole thing was sports: basketball, track...

You look healthy, very dynamic on stage.

I was crazy then, I was nuts. I did run track, but I said "Let me try music". I went to an audition for the school of music at I.U. (Indiana University, Ed) and I said I had an original piece. You know, it's a classical and jazz school, not pop. But I said, "I don't care. I wrote this piece", and I did it. I mean, at least it was nice to try. I went back home and a month later I got a letter saying " You're accepted, no scholarship, but you're accepted". So, I went up to Charles, my brother, who was in another university and wanted me to go there with him. I went up to him and said "I'll go to I.U. "It's time for music, you wanna come? Come with me!" So he quit and went to I.U. with me. We had a band there in college which quickly became very popular on the college campus. Everywhere we went we packed them in.

What was the name of the band?

It was Kilo (laughs). We had a lot of fun then, and one day we were in this club and Mellencamp came in.

You were playing second saxophone in Billy Joel's band; but when Springsteen's new band was announced, they credited you as percussionist and vocalist. Nobody was expecting you to come out with Bruce and play "Born to Run". Then one day, in Milan, that happened. What's the story behind it?

It wasn't decided that I was gonna do sax. Bruce didn't know if he wanted to have sax on tour. He didn't want to replace that... he wanted me to play guitar.

You mean they auditioned you only as a back up singer and rhythm guitar player.

Yeah, they auditioned me on guitar on some keyboards and vocals. Then Bruce asked if I could eventually do some sax. I said yes, but that was all. We concentrated on guitar, nothing more. But one day, when we were on the road, Bruce says "I want to play 'Born to Run'".

Did they come up with the saxophone?

No, they didn't have one; I had mine. They never asked me to bring one; I did it, just in case, you know? I just said to myself "If he doesn't know if he wants it, I'll bring the saxophone with me. And I was right, goddamn right, because one day I'm in the dressing room and he comes and tells me he wants to do that song.

You played the same written solo that Clarence Clemons used to play. Did Bruce himself teach you, or did someone give you a tape of the original song?

He did sing that to me. He goes "Dee, de de de de de de de dee..." (sings the solo).

By the way he sang that to you, can you tell if it's possible that Bruce himself suggested the solo to Clarence originally? Do you have the feeling that it's his own composition?

Possibily. That's possible. He's so much in control. I wouldn't be surprised because he knows exactly what he wants, he sits down, he plays his guitar a little bit, and we look at him and wonder what he's thinking about. He plays "De de di de", like five minutes and we go "Jesus, what is he gonna ask me now!" He's intense. I never worked with anybody so intense. He came up to me one day and said "I'm serious" and I said "Hey, I'm serious too". He takes his music very seriously. Everything: staging, how to walk, the attitude. I have never dealt with anybody so detailed. He knows exactly what to do for his audience, which is experience, I think. It's years of doing what he's doing. That's why he's the Boss. That's why he's got the name he's got. He knows how to control his crowd. That's something he really knows.

When did you first realize that so clearly?

Here in London, for example. The crowd last night was kinda cold... I mean, not really cold but it was like they were studying us, like: "Mmh... this is the new band,let's see". And Bruce told us that was going to happen, he told us before. And he really knew how to handle it. He said "Don't worry about it, they are going to check you out". And then that night in Milan, it became the most famous ever change of the set list. He started throwing different songs, and it worked. He said "Let's do that" or "How about that other song?" We did "Darlington County" once

or twice during soundchecks. We didn't do that yet but I've got the feeling that there's gonna be songs popping up every night. That's Bruce! You gotta be on your toes because you don't know. He turns around and goes: "Bobby Jean", and you were prepared to play a different one and you can't hear him because the crowd is screaming. So we all go "What is he saying? What is he saying?" And the other guys, let's say Tommy, who did hear him, he's not paying attention to you because he's looking at Bruce to get chords or clues. It's great, I love it.

Now that your first contact with his music has been made, how are you deepening that?

Now I want to go back and do some more homework on the lyrics. Like "What is he actually saying?". Because he wants me to be more theatrical in his music. So I'm digging down into that right now. Sometimes I go "What do you mean? It's a dark song but it has a happy beat". Because a happy beat doesn't mean that you just have to go "yeah" or things like that. I think once you get that, the rest is easy. You know when to play extra things and when not to. It's just ... it takes a litlle time.

From the crowd, it seems like at this point of tour the mood is great. Is everything really going that well. Is Bruce really so happy?

From my point of view he is. And he wants to make you happy. He is concerned about how you feel, if you are not comfortable with something, you tell him and he will try to fix it or make it better.

Now that you're familiar with Bruce's material, do you have any favourites?

So far? You mean from the set list? I love "Glory Days" and "Thunder Road". I like "Born to Run", I like "Bobby Jean" and "Gloria's Eyes".

It's really interesting how you're even mentioning songs you don't play on.

I think he's always good. I wish he did "Dancing in the Dark" with the band. Of course, I like "Born in the U.S.A" He has so many songs! He always writes songs! With Billy I had two song books and with Bruce it's like four. But it's cool, he never looks tired, he can always change set, over and over and over again. And he has all these great songs! He's special. He's one of those, what they call... stars!

So now you're totally involved in a kind of white rock'n'roll; everything has been so consequential, so natural, all these guys wanted you in their band. Do you feel like this is your music? A lot of people would now expect your music to be strictly connected with all you did so far. How do you face that?

I started out doing blues, writing songs in that direction. I like my guitars, but at the same time I like my heavy beat because I have a lot of rhythm. If I would describe my music I would say: heavy beat, heavy nineties beat, blues changes: one, four, five, with guitars, some keyboards, vocals and girls singing. And my lyrics so far have been political. I had to ease up on some political messages for a minute. I was getting too intense. I would like to point out the fact that I wrote a couple of love songs also.

GIOVANNI CANTANO PHOTO

Can we assume that your solo career would be creating something between Tracy Chapman and Tina Turner?

I like Tracy, but I'm not a folkie at all. I want to be more aggressive. I would say something between Tina Turner and Jerry Lee Lewis. I wanna rock out there, but they just wanna see a black woman come up like all the other ones that are out: Pop, the Whitney Houston kind of thing. That's not me! So I don't know where I belong. It seems like they're not looking for longevity, like they're looking for something they're sure of. If dance is working right now, that is it, they might want you to be that. But who knows what's gonna be next? I look for longevity, but they don't want guitars.

How do you relate to modern black music?

I like the rhythms. That's about it. Techno music, I'm not really into it. I dig the old funk bands and their sounds and I like people who bring all this back. I don't like all those samplers; they're putting a lot of people, people who really play, out of work. That's not the black music I identify with.

1993 BACKSTREETS Readers' Poll

By Charles R. Cross

The lights dim, the music on the p.a. shuts off, and Bruce Springsteen walks onstage for his first live performance of 1994. He sits on a stool, looks out into the crowd and breaks into an acoustic rendition of "Ramrod." Bruce introduces the next song by saying, "here's a new little arrangement my producer Rick Rubin came up with. Hope you like it." What follows is a heavy metal version of "For You," complete with squealing duelling guitar solos between Bruce and his new guitar player, Steve Vai. When the crowd calms itself, Bruce says "Here's one that I didn't write but I should have. It'll be on my next album, I promise." Crystal starts up a bongo beat and Bruce sings in a deep, throaty voice. "He lives in the jungle, he swings from the trees," it begins. An obscure Creedence song? Not quite. It's Ray Stevens' "Guitarzan," a song that Bruce will play at every show during the next four years and he will make his own.

Does this sound like your ultimate nightmare or a dream come true? Maybe the whole scenario is far-fetched but these were just some of the more unusual suggestions from voters in *Backstreets'* latest readers' poll. This was the fourth poll we've conducted and it covered the widest range of questions, everything from the best song for Bruce to cover (one reader suggested Kenny Rogers' "The Gambler"), to worst performance of an old song by the new band (one voter picked "Rosalita" because there was no Nils and no trampoline). In between the extremes were hundreds of well-thought out suggestions (doing an acoustic version of "Backstreets"), and some consensus on the best of Bruce.

The sheer volume of the response was overwhelming with more than 1600 ballots sent in by the deadline and over 200 after it. More than 40% of the response was from outside the US, remarkable when you consider that sending a letter from Australia costs more than $1.50 US. But postage was the least of our readers concerns as they struggled for hours working to pick the perfect answers. Some ballots were covered with white-out and and one voter swears she spent 14 hours trying to decide her picks. That wouldn't be surprising for many of the ballots since hundreds of readers attached letters (some as long as 26 pages) explaining the reasons for their votes and outlining specifics ("'Bad Moon Rising' should be played next election day") and alternates. "I probably spent way too much time on this," wrote one reader, "but it was fun nonetheless."

It took over 150 hours to tabulate all the ballots (next time we need mark sense forms or a computer solution; any ideas?) and edit them into the list that follows. We threw every response that came in by the deadline into a huge box, had James fish around in them until he found one to pull out, and ended up with the grand prize winner, Jack Nikcevich of Western Springs, IL. He was awarded a lifetime subscription to *Backstreets*.

1. Best album:

1. Born to Run (36%, 588 votes). 2. *Darkness on the Edge of Town* (25%, 401 votes); 3. *Tunnel of Love* (11%, 173 votes); 4. *The River* (7%, 113 votes); 5. *The Wild, The Innocent* (6%, 95 votes); 6. *Nebraska* (5%, 81 votes); 7. *Born in the USA* (4%, 54 votes); 8. *Lucky Town* (3%, 45 votes); 9. *Live 75/85* (2%, 33 votes); 10. *Greetings From Asbury Park, NJ* (1%, 15 votes); 11. *Unplugged* (1%, 7 votes); 12. *Human Touch* (0%, 3 votes).

It was released 18 years ago and at least three other albums in his catalog have outsold it, but no matter what highway Bruce Springsteen heads down he can't seem to outrun the popularity of *Born to Run* with his hardcore fans. For the 4th poll in ten years, *Backstreets* subscribers voted *Born to Run* as Springsteen's best album. *Darkness* was second in the balloting and far ahead of any other selections. Though there were three additional albums to consider since the last readers' poll in 1991, the winning percentages for *Born to Run* and *Darkness* were almost identical in 1993 to 1991 (*Born to Run's* last score was 35% while *Darkness* rated 28%).

Tunnel of Love took the largest upward jump, moving from 6th place in 1991 to 3rd in this

Muscling up in the Born to Run *era: a winner in the poll again and again.*

PETER J. PHILBIN PHOTO

recent balloting. *Born in the USA* dropped from 5th to 7th place while newcomer *Lucky Town* garnered 4% of the vote to take 6th place. *The River* took 4th, buoyed by continued support from European fans. Every album in Springsteen's catalog received votes, although *Born to Run* gathered 200 times the number of votes as *Human Touch* and statistically *Human Touch* gathered less than two tenths of a percent of the total vote.

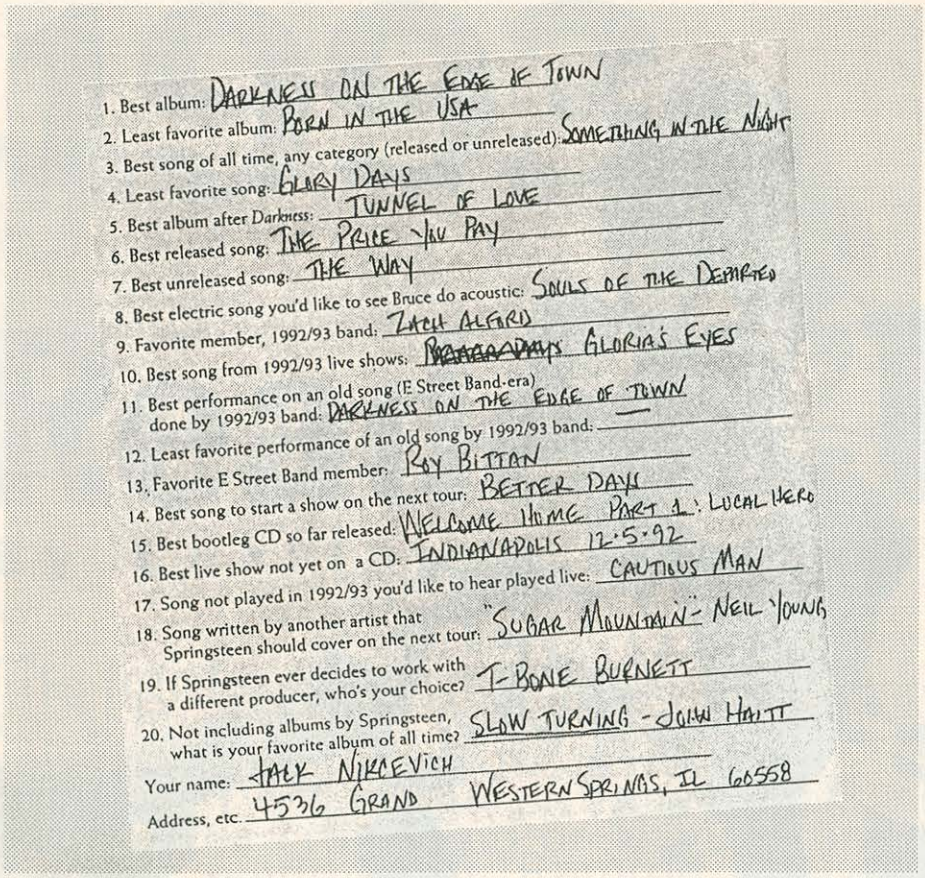
Many readers added comments to their ballots and attempted to add some explanation to their picks. Of the new albums, one voter wrote, "The new records do not appear in my choices for best albums and I suspect this will be true of most of the responses—please don't read too much into this. I think the new records are great and that several songs are among the finest in Bruce's catalog but forced to choose *one* album, I could not see fit to include these. I hope you don't use this poll as another opportunity to draw unfair comparisons between the 'old' and 'new' Bruce. To appropriate songs or albums from the full tapestry of Bruce's work deprives his music of the context that is vital to understanding his contribution." Many readers pointed out that this year's poll asked for "best" album while the 1991 poll asked for "favorite" album. Wrote one voter of *Nebraska*: "Since you asked for the 'best,' the answer is easy since *Nebraska* ranks as great art because it not only defines the the era in which it was created (Ronald Reagan's America), but it simultaneously transcends its own time with universal themes of lost faith, lost hope, and lost souls. A much harder question to answer is what is my favorite album."

2. Least favorite album:

1. Human Touch (25%). 2. *Greetings* (21%); 3. *The Wild, The Innocent* (10%); 4. *Live 75/85* (9%); 5. *Nebraska* (9%); 6. *Born in the USA* (8%); 7. *Tunnel of Love* (5%); 8. *Unplugged* (5%) 9. *The River* (3%); 10. There are none (3%); 11. *Lucky Town* (1%); 12. *Chimes of Freedom* (1%); 13. *Darkness* (0%); 14. *Born to Run* (0%).

You'd expect this poll to be almost a mirror image of the best album polling and for the most part that was true. *Human Touch* was the overwhelming choice for least favorite album. In our 1991 poll *Greetings* won the least favorite category with almost 35% of the vote but in this contest it fared 14% better. Both *Tunnel* and *Nebraska* found larger ranks of supporters while there were more detractors for *Born in the USA* this time around.

Some voters objected to the very idea of listing a least favorite and either left the category blank, or wrote in that they couldn't make a selection. "'Least' implies a negative," wrote one voter, "and Bruce's music has only been a positive force on my life." Even while some fans were voting an album their least favorite they added a positive caveat. "*Human*



1. Best album: DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN
2. Least favorite album: BORN IN THE USA
3. Best song of all time, any category (released or unreleased): SOMETHING IN THE NIGHT
4. Least favorite song: GLORY DAYS
5. Best album after *Darkness*: TUNNEL OF LOVE
6. Best released song: THE PRICE YOU PAY
7. Best unreleased song: THE WAY
8. Best electric song you'd like to see Bruce do acoustic: SOULS OF THE DEPARTED
9. Favorite member, 1992/93 band: ZACH ALFORD
10. Best song from 1992/93 live shows: ~~BADLANDS~~ GLORIA'S EYES
11. Best performance on an old song (E Street Band-era) done by 1992/93 band: DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN
12. Least favorite performance of an old song by 1992/93 band:
13. Favorite E Street Band member: ROY BITTAN
14. Best song to start a show on the next tour: BETTER DAYS
15. Best bootleg CD so far released: WELCOME HOME PART 1: LOCAL HERO
16. Best live show not yet on a CD: INDIANAPOLIS 12·5·92
17. Song not played in 1992/93 you'd like to hear played live: CAUTIOUS MAN
18. Song written by another artist that Springsteen should cover on the next tour: "SUGAR MOUNTAIN" - NEIL YOUNG
19. If Springsteen ever decides to work with a different producer, who's your choice? T-BONE BURNETT
20. Not including albums by Springsteen, what is your favorite album of all time? SLOW TURNING - JOHN HIATT

Your name: JACK NIKCEVICH
Address, etc. 4536 GRAND WESTERN SPRINGS, IL 60558

Contest winner Jack Nikcevich's ballot was selected at random. Here's what he picked.

Touch is my least favorite but other artists would still kill for it," wrote one. Many subscribers added, "I still love it," next to their picks.

There were some trends in the voting based on geography: European fans were far more likely to pick *Tunnel of Love* or *Nebraska* as their least favorite records. *Unplugged* placed high in this category, with more negative votes from US fans than Europeans. Some nastiest comments were reserved for *Unplugged* or *Live*: "Bruce's 'official' live material is embarrassing," wrote one voter. Several fans said the reason they picked *Live* as their least favorite was because of the edits on "Backstreets" and "Growin' Up" ("unconscionable butcher edits," wrote one.).

Darkness received a total of four votes with voters noting they were voting against the production of the album. "The studio version sounded dead," one entry said. One of the *Darkness* nay-sayers was from Bradley Beach, NJ, the township Springsteen lived in when he first drafted many of the songs from *Born to Run*.

Not a single ballot in the batch of almost 2000 votes listed *Born to Run* as least favorite album. This was also true of the 1991 poll, meaning that in the past two polls over 3000 ballots have been cast and not one has listed *Born to Run* least favorite album (and only four people total have voted *Darkness* down).

Some fans pulled the *Chimes of Freedom* EP off their CD shelf and picked it their least favorite album because "it's too short." It really shouldn't qualify, since it's not an album, but enough fans suggested it we tallied it in the results. Perhaps when pressed with having to make a decision as to the least favorite album from their favorite artist, many fans felt they could only choose something that wasn't an album in the first place.

3. Best song of all time, any category (released or unreleased):

1. Thunder Road (25%). 2. Backstreets (12%); 3. Born to Run (12%); 4. Jungleland (8%); 5. Incident (4%); 6. Badlands (3%); 7. The Promise (2%); 8. The Promised Land (2%); 9. The River (2%); 10. Point Blank (1%); Others (29%). Next five: New York City Serenade; Racing in the Street; Atlantic City; Prove It All Night; Murder Inc.

For the second poll in a row, "Thunder Road" wins as the top song, this time by a landslide. One subscriber wrote of the song, "whatever version I listen to—acoustic demo, E Street Band version, album version, Christic version, '92 version—I get goose bumps," and the votes seemed to indicate those feelings were shared by many. For second place, "Backstreets" squeezed past "Born to Run" by a few votes (helped by European voters), though statistically both songs were in a dead heat. A total of 64 songs were selected for this category.

The results in this category are a virtual mirror of the 1991 poll with a couple of exceptions. "The Promise" moved up in the balloting and scores one of the highest positions any unreleased song has ever gained. The big losers were "Rosalita," down to 16th from last poll's 6th place; and "Born in the USA," which was 10th last poll, and this year only garnered a handful of votes. It is worth noting that of the top ten songs listed here, only four were played during the 1992/93 tour.

4. Least favorite song:

1. Real Man (16%). 2. Mary Queen of Arkansas (12%); 3. 57 Channels (8%); 4. Cover Me (6%); 5. The Angel (5%); 6. Crush on You (3%); 7. The Big Muddy (3%); 8. Kitty's Back (2%); 9. Pony Boy (2%); 10. Glory Days (2%). Others (41%). Next five: Cautious Man; Gloria's Eyes; The Long Goodbye; Circus Song; Part Man, Part Monkey.

"Real Man" was the winner by a landslide, overcoming last poll's "Mary." One subscriber noted, "with the last poll, I truly believe that 'Mary Queen of Arkansas' got a bad rap. On the other hand, I believe this choice will be unanimous." Past polls would indicate that for a song to so quickly rise to the top of this category there seems to be some consensus among *Backstreets* subscribers. In our reader's poll on the two most recent albums (*Backstreets* #40), the song also received the very lowest scores, averaging a rating of 4.1 on a scale of 10. Though "Mary" and "The Angel" again scored high in this year's poll, most voters didn't add editorial comments. They saved those snippets for their brief reviews of "57 Channels," and they were vicious: "absolutely, a garbage product from ex-fabulous Little Steven," said one.

There were twice as many songs selected in the "least favorite song" category as in the "best song" category, and there were 50 songs that were selected for both questions. "Glory Days," for example, received 32 votes for "least favorite song" (one reader noted "the synth riff makes me puke"), while in the best song division it earned 34 votes. Every track on *Born in the USA* received at least one vote in the least favorite category, and the majority of songs on *Tunnel* and *Human Touch* were also selected by voters here. Only one track from *Born to Run* ("Meeting") was picked as a "least" favorite.

And before anyone puts too much credit on this poll, consider that some voters seemed to use this category to take out their personal grudges on songs they hated for whatever reason (maybe an "ex" loved the

song). The following songs had votes for "least favorite": The Fever; Jersey Girl; Raise Your Hand; Roulette; Light of Day; Living Proof; New York City Serenade; No Surrender; Ties That Bind; Because the Night; The River; and Downbound Train.

5. Best album after *Darkness*:

1. Tunnel of Love (30%). 2. The River (25%); 3. Lucky Town (16%); 4. Nebraska (13%); 5. Born in the USA (11%); 6. Live (3%); 7. Human Touch (1%); 8. Unplugged (1%).

We added this category in the 1991 poll to weed out the perennial favorite votes for *BTR* and *Darkness*. This time *Tunnel* inched ahead of last poll's winner *The River*. One voter said of *Tunnel*: "What a great record. This may be the single best LP of the '80s." *Lucky Town* was a surprising third place, showing that, though recently released, it is already a crowd favorite. Going down were *BUSA* and *Live*, both of which saw their support erode. But the most surprising statistic was that in the 1991 poll, *The River* beat *Tunnel* by a two to one margin.

6. Best released song:

1. Thunder Road (22%). 2. Born to Run (15%); 3. Backstreets (10%); 4. Jungleland (7%); 5. Incident (5%); 6. Badlands (4%); 7. The River (3%); 8. The Promised Land (2%); 9. Brilliant Disguise (2%); 10. Glory Days (2%); Others (28%).

These winners reflect those from question 3 with unreleased songs weeded out. Results were not exactly the same because some voters took this opportunity to get in another favorite on paper, voting for "Thunder Road" in question number 3, for example, and then voting for "Brilliant Disguise" on this question.

7. Best unreleased song:

1. This Hard Land (23%). 2. The Promise (11%); 3. Murder Inc. (13%); 4. Loose Ends (11%); 5. Frankie (5%); 6. Thundercrack (3%); 7. If I Was the Priest (3%); 8. The Fever (3%); 9. Where the Bands Are (2%); 10. Don't Look Back (2%). Next five: Preacher's Daughter; Man at the Top; Zero and Blind Terry; The Way; Take 'Em As They Come.

It really comes as no surprise that "This Hard Land" has suddenly become one of the most visible unreleased songs in Springsteen's catalog after he began playing it on the 1993 tour. Like several other unreleased gems from the past, Springsteen introduced this song as one that maybe he *should* have released. When he announced the song in Europe, he joked "you all bought the bootlegs," and he was right. If past history is an indicator, expect this song to follow "Be True," "Roulette," "Red Headed Woman," and "Light of Day," and eventually be released officially.

"Murder Inc." and "The Promise" were at the top of the poll last time around and they remain strong contenders along with numerous outtakes from *Darkness* and *BUSA*. One reader noted that "Murder Inc." is "a song that's very relevant today and would fit in fine with the '92 set lists." In total over 69 different unreleased songs were named by voters. Some of the more diverse and unusual picks were "He's Guilty," "Club Soul City," and "Winter Song."

8. Best electric song you'd like to see Bruce do acoustic:

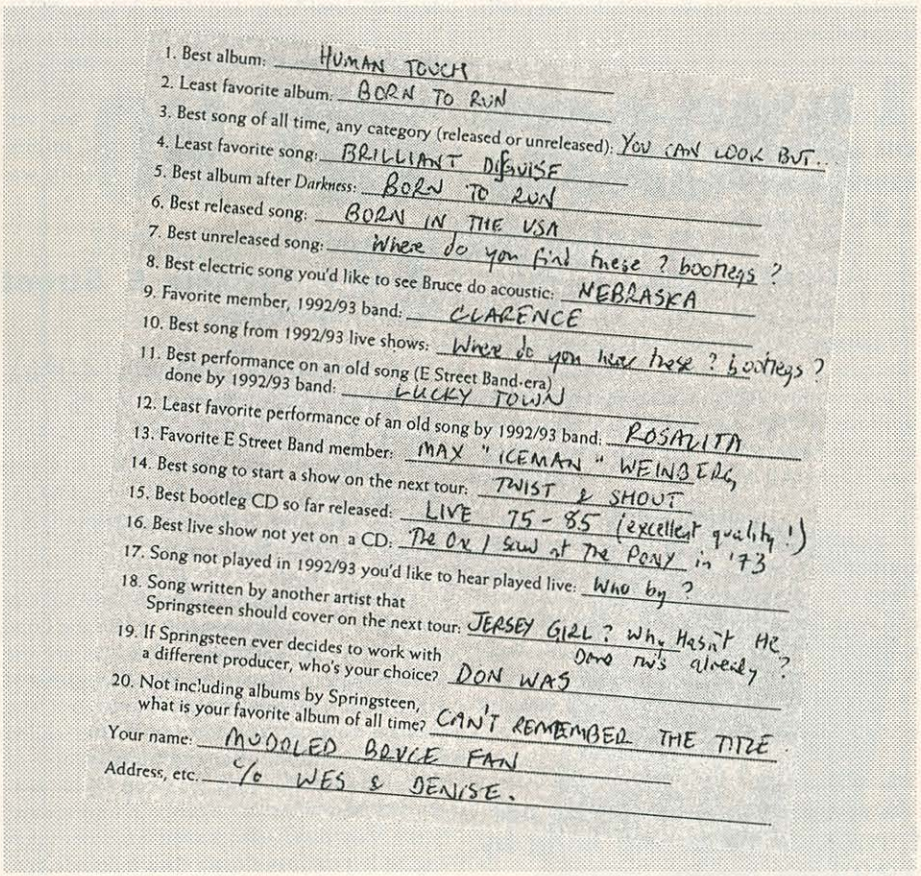
1. Backstreets (5%). 2. Badlands (3%); 3. Bobby Jean (3%); 4. Living Proof (3%); 5. The Price You Pay (2%); 6. The Promised Land (2%); 7. Lucky Town (2%); 8. Rosalita (2%); 9. Real World (Again) (2%); 10. Prove It All Night (1%). Next five: Racing; Two Hearts; Downbound Train; Incident; Saint in the City.

"Backstreets" wins this poll though of all categories, the winner here had the smallest percentage of the total vote. There were almost 200 songs suggested and even the winner only received 80 votes. One voter summed it up by writing: "After hearing what Bruce did to TR and BTR acoustically, the better question is what classic song *wouldn't* I want to hear done acoustically?" Some of the more esoteric choices were "Baby I," "The Fever," "Roulette," "Cover Me," "57 Channels," "Ramrod," and "Pink Cadillac."

9. Favorite member, 1992/93 band:

1. Crystal Taliafero (36%). 2. Roy Bittan (20%); 3. Bobby King (16%); 4. Shane Fontayne (11%); 5. Zachary Alford (9%); 6. Gia Ciambotti (2%); 7. Bruce Springsteen (2%); 8. Tommy Sims (2%); 9. Carol Dennis (1%); 10. Joe Ely (1%).

Crystal wins this category hands down, with almost twice as many votes as Roy Bittan, despite her rookie status in the band. Bobby King also did well considering his limited time on stage and Shane Fontayne seems to have increased his fan base over the past



1. Best album: HUMAN TOUCH
2. Least favorite album: BORN TO RUN
3. Best song of all time, any category (released or unreleased): YOU CAN LOOK BUT..
4. Least favorite song: BRILLIANT DISGUISE
5. Best album after *Darkness*: BORN TO RUN
6. Best released song: BORN IN THE USA
7. Best unreleased song: Where do you find these ? bootlegs ?
8. Best electric song you'd like to see Bruce do acoustic: NEBRASKA
9. Favorite member, 1992/93 band: CLARENCE
10. Best song from 1992/93 live shows: Where do you hear these ? bootlegs ?
11. Best performance on an old song (E Street Band-era) done by 1992/93 band: LUCKY TOWN
12. Least favorite performance of an old song by 1992/93 band: ROSALITA
13. Favorite E Street Band member: MAX "ICEMAN" WEINBERG
14. Best song to start a show on the next tour: TWIST & SHOUT
15. Best bootleg CD so far released: LIVE 75-85 (excellent quality!)
16. Best live show not yet on a CD: The One I saw at The Pony in '73
17. Song not played in 1992/93 you'd like to hear played live: Who by ?
18. Song written by another artist that Springsteen should cover on the next tour: JERSEY GIRL ? Why hasn't he done it already ?
19. If Springsteen ever decides to work with a different producer, who's your choice? DON WAS
20. Not including albums by Springsteen, what is your favorite album of all time? CAN'T REMEMBER THE TITLE

Your name: MUDDLED BRUCE FAN
Address, etc.: C/O WES & DENISE.

Wes and Denise took on the persona of a muddled Bruce fan... (this is a joke).

year (most of his supporters were from Europe). Zach wins the misspelled name division and several voters just wrote in "drummer." Gia seemed to win votes exclusively from adolescent males one of whom noted "her legs were heaven, her breasts were the altar," etc. Bruce himself came away with 2% of the vote and there were votes for "none of the above" from disgruntled fans.

10. Best song from 1992/93 live shows:

1. Light of Day (25%). 2. Leap of Faith (6%); 3. This Hard Land (6%); 4. Souls of the Departed (4%); 5. Lucky Town (4%); 6. Trapped (4%); 7. Living Proof (3%); 8. Thunder Road (3%); 9. Roll of the Dice (3%); 10. Atlantic City (2%). Next five: Soul Driver; My Beautiful Reward; Badlands; Better Days; Man's Job.

"Light of the Day" won this category with more than four times the number of votes as "Leap." One subscriber called it "the show maker." The third place showing of "This Hard Land" has to be considered somewhat of a surprise since the song was only played 30 times in 1993, mostly in Europe. "Souls of the Departed" was a new song that fared well with voters and considering how straightahead the performance was of this tune, Springsteen's passionate rendition was what won over voters.

11. Best performance on an old song (E Street Band-era) done by 1992/1993 band:

1. Atlantic City (22%). 2. Light of Day (12%); 3. Trapped (9%); 4. Badlands (8%); 5. Because the Night (7%); 6. Darkness (6%); 7. Born to Run (5%); 8. Hungry Heart (3%); 9. Prove It (2%); 10. Glory Days (2%). Next five: My Hometown; Working on the Highway; Open All Night; Spirit in the Night; Rosalita.

"Atlantic City" was the favorite by almost two to one. "Badlands" is the highest ranked song "from the old days," as one voter wrote, and it earned 8% of the vote. Only 24 songs got votes in this category and there were numerous hard-liners who wrote in "none," suggesting that the 1992/93 band was not accepted in every corner.

12. Least favorite performance of an old song by 1992/93 band:

1. Born in the USA (14%). 2. Born to Run (13%); 3. Cover Me (9%); 4. Glory Days (6%); 5. Badlands (6%); 6. Darkness (5%); 7. Hungry Heart (4%); 8. Bobby Jean (4%); 9. Working on the Highway (4%); 10. Prove It All Night (3%). Next five: Rosalita; Who'll Stop the Rain; My Hometown; I'm on Fire; The River.

This was the category that attracted the most negative comments from nay-sayers. Some of the comments were vicious like when one voter noted that "Cover Me" would be his least favorite performance "by any band." "Glory Days," was called "forced," "needs to be put away," and "just not the same." One voter called "Darkness" "a sacrilege" and another noted that "every version of this song I have from the '92/'93 tour is just not as powerful as '78, or '80/'81, and the version from Stockholm is the weakest version I've ever heard." The strongest venom was saved for "Born in the USA" where more than one reader suggested "Zach's great but this isn't the same without Max." When it came to "Bobby Jean," one Italian fan eloquently listed it, "because I am missing the saxophone." A heartless reader responded to this question by writing in "all."

There were 30 songs selected in this category and of the top ten "least favorites," six were also winners in the "favorite" category. "Darkness," for example was both the 6th least favorite song and the 6th best. While "Born in the USA" was the clear winner as the least favorite performance of an old song, some people loved "Born to Run" while others, as the results proved, hated the new version. "Who'll Stop the Rain" scored surprisingly high considering that the song was infrequently played.

13. Favorite E Street Band member:

1. Clarence Clemons (40%). 2. Max Weinberg (26%); 3. Steve Van Zandt (11%); 4. Roy Bittan (10%); 5. Nils Lofgren (8%); 6. Garry Tallent (2%); 7. Danny Federici (1%); 8. Patti Scialfa (1%); 9. Bruce Springsteen (1%); 10. Vini Lopez (1%).

Clarence Clemons winning a popularity contest with Springsteen fans is like the Pope getting named Catholic of the year yet the enthusiastic comments the Big Man garnered were still heartwarming. "Maybe not the musical core of the band," one voter called him," but certainly the emotional center of the group." As for Max, one voter said "simply the best drummer in rock 'n' roll today." Steve Van Zandt also scored high considering he left the band more than a decade ago. There were scattered votes for La Bamba, David Sancious and Suki Lahav.

14. Best song to start a show on the next tour:

1. Badlands (4%). 2. Incident (3%); 3. Born to Run (2%); 4. Prove It (2%); 5. Better Days (2%); 6. Thunder Road (2%); 7. Night (2%); 8. The Ties That Bind (2%); 9. Lucky Town (2%). 10. "Something from the next album" (2%).

The results here don't show any clear statistical winners, though there were suggested titles that would be dramatically different in terms of pacing: Brilliant Disguise; For You; Sandy; Nebraska; Stolen Car; Factory; Valentine's Day; Used Cars; and The Promise. While these songs might be interesting openers, they don't compare in pace and tempo with previous show openers like "Born in the USA" or "Thunder Road." A few readers relegated their least favorite songs to this slot as one picked "Cover Me," explaining, "he's going to play it anyway, so we might as well get it over with early."

Many readers expanded upon their picks and suggested "Living Proof" "in honor of the new family member," or "The Boys are Back in Town" "in honor of "a reunion with the E Street Band." Since this category didn't limit responses to Springsteen songs or to released catalog tunes, readers suggested outtakes and covers including Creedence Clearwater's "Lodi," Roger McGuinn's "Ballad of Easy Rider," and Joe Ely's "Settle For Love." As for outtakes, imagine a show starting with "Murder Inc.," "Where the Bands Are," "Don't Look Back," "From Small Things," or even the classic instrumental "Summer on Signal Hill."

15. Best bootleg CD so far:

1. Piece de Resistance (12%). 2. Live in the Promised Land (11%); 3. The Saint, the Incident and Main Point Shuffle (7%); 4. In the Midnight Hour (6%); 5. Roses and Broken Hearts (6%); 6. All Those Years (5%); 7. Welcome Home (4%); 8. You Mean So Much to Me (2%); 9. "Don't own CD player" (2%) 10. Forced to Confess (2%). Next five: Forgotten Songs; Murder Inc.; Chimes of Freedom; Springsteen, Raitt and Browne; Born in the Studio.

While this question appeared simple on its face, it turned out to be a category filled with debate. More than 15% of entries were blank and many voters used the space, or attached pages, to debate the inherent nature of bootlegging. Also a number of entrants said they didn't own CD players. "I still listen to 8-tracks," remarked one voter.

Comments con: "Bootleg CDs are too expensive." "I don't believe in bootlegs or

piracy." "Bootlegs are illegal and most are shitty anyway."

Comments pro: "I wish I knew where to buy boot CDs because the only guy I knew went out of business. With the inadequacies of Bruce's official live recordings, this is a real issue." "I am listening to *In the Midnight Hour* right now and it is fantastic."

And some readers wrote editorial comments about *Backstreets*: "Are these the same bootlegs you 'in no shape or form endorse?'" "Personally, I think you relish the fact that you have access to unreleased material and others don't. I think you enjoy throwing it in our faces that you have it and we don't." "You'd do us a better service if you told us how to get these or if you sold them to us."

There were 30 different titles suggested in this category and many of the titles that won multiple kudos were ones previously selected by *Backstreets* reviewers as some of the worst-sounding releases available.

16. Best live show not yet on a CD:

1. 6/24/93 (25%).
2. 8/20/81 (10%);
3. 4/29/76 (5%).

Readers continued the debate here while suggesting several hundred different shows. Many shows corresponded to the voter's hometowns which may explain why it has long been rumored that one of the biggest selling Springsteen bootlegs in Europe has been a Milan concert, where Springsteen was virtually anointed by the legions of Italian fans. Whether it was a 1992 show in Calgary, or a 1993 night in Gent, the winner of this category almost always was the same town as the return address of the voter.

Many votes were also cast for concerts that already are on bootleg CDs and the time lapse between the ballot being printed and the responses coming in, saw bootleg releases in Europe of the 6/24/93 and 3/23/93 shows. Many voters obviously weren't aware of these new releases and the slew of European bootlegs makes it hard for anyone to keep up. Eventually, it seems, every show Bruce ever did may end up on a CD.

The 8/20/81 Los Angeles Vietnam Veteran's performance features the only known performance of "Ballad of Easy Rider." The Memphis 4/29/76 featured Eddie Floyd, who guested with Bruce on three numbers. This show is perhaps most remembered not so much for what happened at the concert, but instead for what happened after it was over: It was on this night that Springsteen jumped the fence at Graceland hoping to meet Elvis Presley. These two important shows no doubt will one day make it to bootleg CD (everything else seems to) but more than one reader suggested that these historical performances warrant a legitimate live release from official channels.

17. Song not played in 1992/93 you'd like to hear played live:

1. Backstreets (12%).
2. Incident (8%); 3. Jungleland (6%); 4. Lost in the Flood (3%); 5. Cadillac Ranch (3%); 6. The Price You Pay (3%); 7. Candy's Room (2%); 8. Tunnel of Love (2%); 9. She's the One (2%); 10. Drive All Night (2%). Next five: The Promise ; Murder Inc.; New York City Serenade; Something in the Night; Meeting Across the River.

Like question 14, the answers here were all over the map, with little consensus found. A full 10% of the votes were for songs that Springsteen and the band *did* play at some point during the last tour so perhaps some thought the question meant what they personally didn't hear.

The top ten here are all old songs, stretching back to the surprise "Lost in the Flood" and Springsteen's first album. Many of the songs that gathered some degree of support here ("Meeting Across the River," "Factory," "Kitty's Back") were the very songs that some voters called among their least favorites earlier in the polling. There were even votes for "Mary Queen of Arkansas" and "The Angel."

Some voters cast their votes for songs Springsteen has never played live perhaps thinking this question was their quiz on that. Votes came in for "Lucky Man," "Chicken Lips," and "Two for the Road."

18. Song written by another artist that Springsteen should cover on the next tour:

1. Elvis Presley, "Suspicious Minds," (3%). 2. Neil Young, "Rockin' in the Free World," (3%); 3. Joe Ely, "Settle For Love," (2%); 4. The Animals, "House of the Rising Sun," (2%); 5. Bob Dylan, "Like a Rolling Stone," (2%); 6. Creedence Clearwater Revival, "Bad Moon Rising," (2%); 7. Bob Dylan, "Highway 61 Revisited," (2%); 8. U2, "With or Without You," (1%); 9. Social Distortion, "Ball and Chain." (1%); 10. Elvis Presley, "Jailhouse Rock," (1%); Next five: Bob Dylan, "When the Night Comes Falling,"; Roger McGuinn, "Ballad of Easy Rider,"; John Mellencamp, "Pink Houses,"; CCR, "Proud Mary,"; Marc Cohn, "Walking in Memphis."

This question was like opening up Pandora's box with our readers: Almost 1,000 different responses were suggested listing 500 different artists and reading like an encyclopedia of rock 'n' roll. The list began with Bryan Adams "Kids Wanna Rock" and ended with ZZ Top's "Can't Stop Rockin.'"

Considering the laws of probability it was surprising that any song would gather more than a couple of votes, so those at the top of this list must clearly have some support. Only

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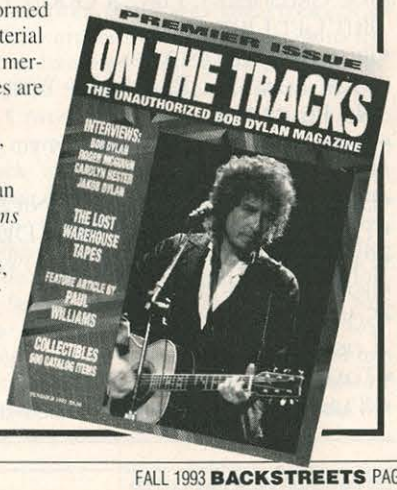


The 25 most unusual covers suggested:

- BLACK 47: FIRE OF FREEDOM
- JIMMY BUFFETT: WHY DON'T WE GET DRUNK AND SCREW
- TRACY CHAPMAN: FAST CAR
- GARTH BROOKS: FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES
- ELVIS COSTELLO: MYSTERY DANCE
- THE CURE: JUST LIKE HEAVEN
- DEF LEPPARD: PHOTOGRAPH
- THE DIVINYLS: I TOUCH MYSELF
- EAGLES: HOTEL CALIFORNIA
- GEORGIA SATELLITES: KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF
- GUNS 'N ROSES: NOVEMBER RAIN
- JIMI HENDRIX: THE WIND CRIES MARY
- BILLIE HOLIDAY: GOD BLESS THE CHILD
- HUMAN BEINZ: NOBODY BUT ME
- CHRIS ISAAK: WICKED GAME
- THE JAM: TOWN CALLED MALICE
- HUEY LEWIS: POWER OF LOVE
- STEVIE NICKS: I SING FOR THE THINGS
- THE POLICE: EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE
- THE PRETENDERS: MIDDLE OF THE ROAD
- PRINCE: I COULD NEVER TAKE THE PLACE OF YOUR MAN
- KENNY ROGERS: THE GAMBLER
- FRANK SINATRA: MY WAY
- PATTY SMYTH: SOMETIMES LOVE JUST AIN'T ENOUGH (DONE AS A DUET BY BRUCE AND PATTI)
- THE WHO: PINBALL WIZARD

Didn't BRUCE write these songs already?:

- BRYAN ADAMS: SUMMER OF '69
- JON BON JOVI: BED OF ROSES
- TOM COCHRANE: LIFE IS A HIGHWAY
- MARC COHN: WALKING IN MEMPHIS
- STEVE EARLE: COPPERHEAD ROAD
- JOE GRUSHECKY: HAVE A GOOD TIME BUT GET OUT ALIVE
- BILLY JOEL: ALLENTOWN
- MEAT LOAF: ALL REVVED UP WITH NO PLACE TO GO
- JOHN MELLENCAMP: MINUTES TO MEMORIES
- ELLIOTT MURPHY: DRIVE ALL NIGHT
- TOM PETTY: RUNNIN' DOWN A DREAM
- PATTI SCIALFA: COME TOMORROW
- BOB SEGER: BETTY LOU
- SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY: IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME
- TOM WAITS: DOWNTOWN TRAIN
- WARREN ZEVON: POOR PITIFUL ME

a psychic could predict that Elvis Presley's "Suspicious Minds" would come out on top as it's not a song with any obvious Springsteen connection. Elvis recorded over 900 tunes and a dozen were suggested in this poll.

Neil Young's "Rockin' in the Free World" has apparently attained the stature of a classic among *Backstreets* subscribers. All votes came in before Young's searing version of this song with Pearl Jam at the 1993 MTV Music Awards which might further increase support for this cover. "House of the Rising Sun" was described by one voter as "the *one* song Springsteen was destined to play."

The popularity of "Rockin' in the Free World" illustrates how many voters seemed to answer this question by selecting songs that—in tempo, title, and theme—resemble songs from Springsteen's own catalog. How else can you explain the tremendous number of titles suggested by artists like John Mellencamp (12 titles suggested), Bob Seger (11 songs), and Southside Johnny (13 songs)? Can you imagine Springsteen playing Seger's "Against the Wind," or "Night Moves," or ending his set with Mellencamp's "Small Town" in lieu of "My Hometown"? Several of our readers could.

The big winner in any cover song competition is always Bob Dylan and his Bobness won this contest. A total of 38 different Dylan songs were suggested stretching from songs Bruce has already covered (like "I Want You"), to songs by Dylan that few have had the courage to try ("You're a Big Girl Now," "Lay, Lady, Lay," "(Dirge from) Planet Waves").

The concept of covering another artist's work is to bring your own interpretation to the tune, and, if done effectively, make it one of your own signature songs. By covering "Twist and Shout" and "The Detroit Medley" for so many years, Springsteen put his own stamp on these songs. "Jersey Girl" was an obscure Tom Waits song until Bruce polished it with his own spin and played it to the masses. "Jersey Girl" is one of the few cover songs Springsteen has ever officially released and at this point it's almost hard to believe he *didn't* write it. But could the same ever be said of Guns 'N Roses' "November Rain"?

19. If Springsteen ever decides to work with a different producer, who's your choice?

1. Steve Van Zandt (13%). 2. Daniel Lanois (11%); 3. Mike Campbell (4%); 4. Jimmy Iovine (3%); 5. Rick Rubin (3%); 6. Neil Young (2%); 7. Don Was (2%); 8. Phil Spector (2%); 9. Scott Litt (2%); 10. "Anyone but Jon Landau" (2%).

Like many of the other questions in this poll, the multitude of answers given to this question indicates a vast diversity among Springsteen fans. Over 100 different producers were suggested and with the exception of Van Zandt and Lanois, there were no clear cut favorites. Van Zandt is just one of many E Streeters to get votes: Also suggested from the band were Garry Tallent, Nils Lofgren, Roy Bittan, Danny Federici, Max Weinberg and Clarence Clemons. Some readers went far enough back into Shore music history to suggest George Theiss.

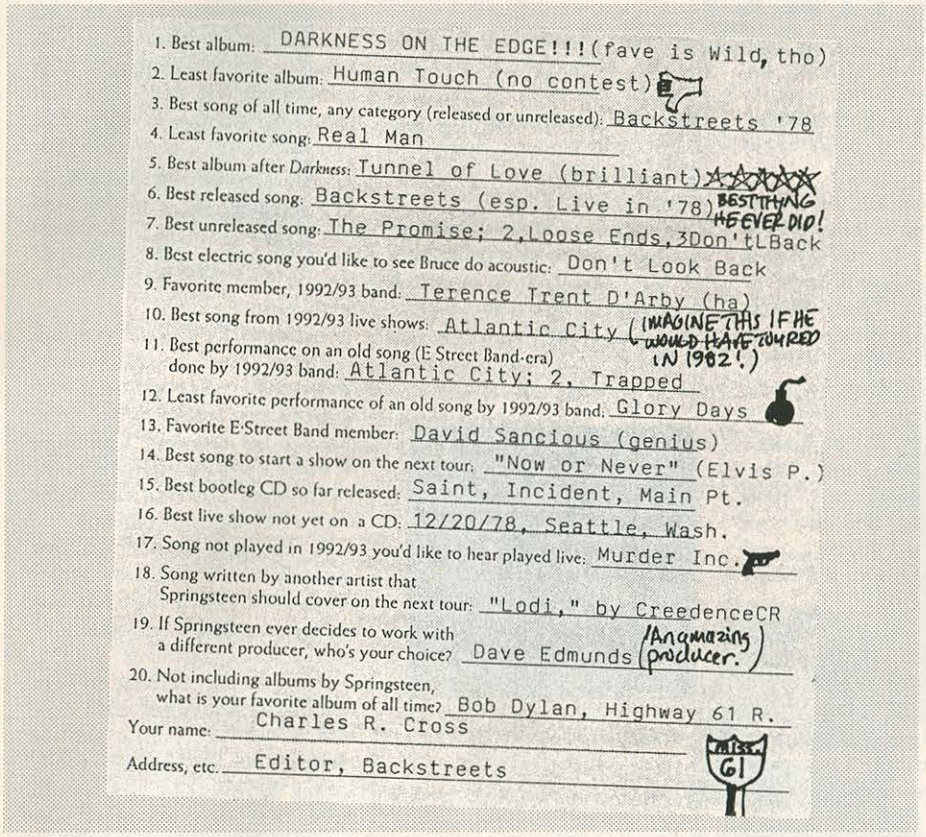
Actually having worked as a producer before did not seem to be a requirement with all voters. For that matter, neither did being alive—the late John Hammond received four votes, and there were two for Albert Grossman. A vast number of musicians were selected, many probably picked for their own music rather than their production skills. Imagine these artists behind the mixing board at a Bruce session: John Mellencamp; Van Morrison; Todd Rundgren; Bob Seger; Sting; Joe Strummer; Nick Lowe; J Mascis; Keith Richards; Billy Joel; Mark Knopfler; John Hiatt; Peter Gabriel; John Fogerty; Ry Cooder; Jackson Browne; Jon Bon Jovi; or James Taylor. Several producers associated with hard rock also were suggested including Mutt Lange; Bob Rock; Steve Albini; Butch Vig; and David Z. Other eclectic suggestions were Flood; Brian Eno; Phil Ramone; Jim Steinman; Quincy Jones; Steve Jordan; and Nile Rogers.

Mike Campbell came on closer to the deadline, and obviously his stock went up as Patti's record began to circulate. One reader noted, "he helped Patti out so he could probably do just as good with Bruce." There were several votes that suggested Bruce should stay with Jon Landau ("why change?" asked one fan) while others suggested "anyone but Landau." One voter even took this opportunity to slam Landau's production of the MC5's *Back in the USA*.

There were some votes that were hard to take seriously. New age star Yanni producing Bruce? Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder directing Springsteen in the studio? Four voters picked Mike Appel while 11 ballots suggested *Backstreets* editor Charles R. Cross.

20. Not including albums by Springsteen, what is your favorite album of all time?

1. Southside Johnny, Better Days (4%). 2. Bob Dylan, *Blood on the Tracks* (3%); 3. U2, *The Joshua Tree* (2%); 4. U2, *Achtung Baby* (2%); 5. The Beatles, *Abbey Road* (2%); 6. John Mellencamp, *Scarecrow* (2%); 7. Southside Johnny, *Hearts of Stone* (2%); 8. Creedence Clearwater Revival, *Chronicle* (2%); 9. John Mellencamp, *The Lonesome Jubilee* (1%); 10. Bob Dylan, *High-*



1. Best album: DARKNESS ON THE EDGE!!!(fave is Wild, tho)
2. Least favorite album: Human Touch (no contest)
3. Best song of all time, any category (released or unreleased): Backstreets '78
4. Least favorite song: Real Man
5. Best album after *Darkness*: Tunnel of Love (brilliant)
6. Best released song: Backstreets (esp. Live in '78) BEST THING HE EVER DID!
7. Best unreleased song: The Promise; 2, Loose Ends, 3 Don't Look Back
8. Best electric song you'd like to see Bruce do acoustic: Don't Look Back
9. Favorite member, 1992/93 band: Terence Trent D'Arby (ha)
10. Best song from 1992/93 live shows: Atlantic City (IMAGINE THIS IF HE WOULD HAVE TOURED IN 1982!)
11. Best performance on an old song (E Street Band-era) done by 1992/93 band: Atlantic City; 2, Trapped
12. Least favorite performance of an old song by 1992/93 band: Glory Days
13. Favorite E Street Band member: David Sancious (genius)
14. Best song to start a show on the next tour: "Now or Never" (Elvis P.)
15. Best bootleg CD so far released: Saint, Incident, Main Pt.
16. Best live show not yet on a CD: 12/20/78, Seattle, Wash.
17. Song not played in 1992/93 you'd like to hear played live: Murder Inc.
18. Song written by another artist that Springsteen should cover on the next tour: "Lodi," by CreedenceCR
19. If Springsteen ever decides to work with a different producer, who's your choice? Dave Edmunds (An amazing producer.)
20. Not including albums by Springsteen, what is your favorite album of all time? Bob Dylan, Highway 61 R.

Your name: Charles R. Cross

Address, etc.: Editor, Backstreets

Charles R. Cross edits Backstreets.

way 61 Revisited (1%). Next ten: Pink Floyd, *The Wall*; Eagles, *Hotel California*; Dire Straits, *Brothers in Arms*; The Allman Brothers, *Live at the Fillmore East*; The Bodeans, *Love& Hope& Sex&Dreams*; The Rolling Stones, *Sticky Fingers*; The Beatles, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*; Fleetwood Mac, *Rumours*; The Rolling Stones, *Exile on Main Street*; Hank Williams, *Greatest Hits*.

Though *Backstreets* has conducted numerous polls and contests before, involving all matters Bruce, never had we asked questions beyond the scope of the Springsteen world. Not only did the results prove that the musical tastes of our subscribers are incredibly diverse (spanning from AC/DC to Frank Zappa), but also *Backstreets* readers appeared to be sophisticated music fans, in many cases picking hidden gems or undiscovered classics from well known artists. Though *Backstreets* is a magazine that concentrates on Springsteen and the Jersey Shore sound, when it's time to put the Bruce CDs away our readers are listening to everything from Thelonious Monk's *Monk's Dream* to the Monks of Doom and their recent CD *Forgery*. Only a handful of readers weren't up to the task and left the category blank or wrote in cryptic comments like "there are other albums?" or "nothing can match Bruce albums."

The winning artist wasn't as much of a surprise as was the title of the album. Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes' *Hearts of Stone* has long been considered a quintessential NJ album. It was the selection of *Better Days* that surprised us but it probably benefited by being a recent release and from Southside's recent tour. The majority of the ballots selecting this album came from Europe where Johnny's shows this year have been well received. It also must be noted that so many different albums were selected by voters that a dozen votes meant the difference between 2nd and 3rd place. None of this is to diminish *Better Days*: Last year *Backstreets* described *Better Days* as a record with "a sound that rock 'n' roll had all but forgotten." Southside can also be proud of *Hearts of Stone's* 7th place showing, and the fact that five of his other albums were also selected by readers.

Though *Blood on the Tracks* came in 12th place in the 1987 *Rolling Stone* "100 Best Albums of the Last 20 Years" critics poll, it took 2nd place in the *Backstreets* contest, and Dylan's *Highway 61* came in 10th. Dylan collected votes for 11 other albums including the bootleg box *Ten of Swords*. U2 received votes for six albums and managed to take both 3rd and 4th place.

Creedence Clearwater Revival's *Chronicle* is a greatest hits collection, but *Backstreets'* readers nevertheless voted it their 8th favorite non-Springsteen release. In the *Rolling Stone* poll, Creedence could do no better than 27th place for their *Willy and the Poor Boys* record. Springsteen is a big fan of CCR and one might suppose he would personally pick a CCR record to answer this question. Springsteen has covered a half dozen songs that appear on *Chronicle*, which is one of many reasons every Springsteen fan should own this album.

Only one album in the *Backstreets* top ten appeared in the top ten of the *Rolling Stone* (*Abbey Road*), and few of the top records selected by *Backstreets* readers have been frequent winners in other critics' lists. When critic Jimmy Guterman wrote his *The Best Rock 'n' Roll Records of All Time* book (1992, Citadel) the first artist and album from the *Backstreets* top ten to match his list was his number 82 pick, *Hearts of Stone*. In Dave Marsh's 1992 book of the 1001 greatest singles, Bob Dylan was the only *Backstreets* top ten artist to appear in the top 25 (Bruce made #24).

If the *Backstreets* top ten don't make it to many critics lists, imagine how critics would rate these albums selected by at least two voters in the *Backstreets* poll: Bryan Adams, *Reckless*; Bon Jovi, *Slippery When Wet*; Garth Brooks, *Ropin' the Wind*; Phil Collins, *Face Value*; Def Leppard, *Pyromania*; Peter Frampton, *Frampton Comes Alive*; Extreme, *Pornograffitti*; Jerry Garcia, *Reflections*; Guns 'N Roses, *Use Your Illusion II*; Kiss, *Destroyer*; Led Zeppelin, *Houses of the Holy*; Huey Lewis, *Fore*; Richard Marx, *Repeat Offender*; The Monkees, *Headquarters*; Rush, *A Show of Hands*; Joe Satriani, *Flying in a Blue Dream*; George Winston, *December*; and ZZ Top, *Eliminator*. Say what you will about these albums (several are among the *Backstreets* staff's guilty pleasures), but these are not albums and artists frequently found at the top of critics' polls.

The rest of the list did show some trends: The majority of albums selected were by white guy singer/songwriters (Bob Seger, Tom Petty, Billy Joel, John Hiatt, John Wesley Harding, Jackson Browne, Van Morrison, Tom Waits, Paul Simon, Lou Reed, Robbie Robertson, Elton John, Steve Forbert, Dave Edmunds, Elvis Costello, Nick Lowe, Neil Young, and pretty much any other white guy who ever picked up a guitar to sing a song). Marc Cohn's self-titled debut album almost made it in the top 20, an impressive showing for a new artist.

On the female front, Melissa Etheridge has a huge following with Springsteen fans and so do Tracy Chapman, Joni Mitchell, Laura Nyro, and Kate Bush. Patti Scialfa's debut album was selected by half a dozen Springsteen fans and one felt the need to write "really" next to the pick.

One other trend was the strength of American artists over the British, who frequently dominate these critic poll listings. On our list there were more votes for Presley than Costello, more for R.E.M. than the Who, more for Prince than for Queen.

Rock 'n' roll doesn't start and end with "Cadillac Ranch," and *Backstreets* readers seem to know this. The poll was inspiring to anyone who appreciates the rock 'n' roll time-line and the history of the genre. That a Springsteen fan would want to take records by Sam Cooke, Otis Redding, the Clash, Little Feat, the Jayhawks, Bob Marley and Meat Loaf to a desert island shows a breadth of tastes, a wide spectrum of interests and passions. And not one person voted for Paula Abdul.

COLLECTING

By Jeff McDermott and Lynn Elder

For the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnists solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

Unauthorized CDs are growing in numbers and with that growth, expect some real ripoffs—our advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it.

Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance, and sound quality on a scale from one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally being found in legitimate releases.

• USA Blues
(Crystal Cat Records)
Packaging: 5
Sound Quality: 8-9
Performance: 9

This single disc collects 15 largely acoustic performances, the majority of which are from the 1993 European tour (the disc begins with "Spirit in the Night" and "For You" from the Meadowlands run last year). The European tour found Bruce revitalized, no more so than during the three-song acoustic sets that began each show. Using state-of-the-art digital audience recordings, *USA Blues* gathers from various shows all the songs performed in those mini-sets along with other songs exclusive to the continental jaunt, all in excellent quality. Sure, there's some audience cheering at times (wouldn't you cheer when "This Hard Land" kicks in?) but the overall fidelity of these recordings puts the listener in an awfully good seat for some truly inspired performances.

Included here are the radical acoustic readings of "Darkness on the Edge of Town," "Adam Raised a Cain," and "Seeds," along with one-off performances of "USA-Blues" (the title Springsteen gave for "Born in the USA" in this breathtaking acoustic arrangement), the virtually unrecognizable "Point Blank," and "The Promised Land." Other gems: "This Hard Land," "Mansion on the Hill," and covers of Emmylou Harris's "Satan's Jewel Crown" and Jimmy Cliff's "Many Rivers to Cross."

Although the packaging is nothing special, all the source concerts are listed. *USA Blues* is a pleasure to listen to. If you're feeling burned out on Bruce, give this a spin and hear Springsteen at his best: reinventing himself.

• Sheffield Night
(Crystal Cat Records, 3 CDs)
Packaging: 7
Sound Quality: 9
Performance: 9

This triple-CD set is the companion piece to *USA Blues*. It presents the entire April 15, 1993 Sheffield, England show, taken from an exceptional digital audience recording. This show was a fan favorite in Europe, and listening to the well-assembled CD, it's easy to hear why. A high-energy standard set is augmented by such highlights as "Because the Night" and "Prove It All Night."

The sound quality holds up not only throughout the course of the Sheffield gig, but also through the bonus tracks as well. Ten additional tracks from Europe round out the set, including "Trapped," "Across the Borderline," "Viva Las Vegas," "Rockin' All Over the World," and "It's All Right." The sound quality on some of these tracks, particularly on "Across the Borderline" from Berlin and "It's All Right" from Copenhagen, is as good as a soundboard recording. The set is a rare combination of intelligent construction and superior sound sources.

For U.S. fans, *Sheffield Night* offers a chance to learn what all the fuss was regarding the European tour. The entire show, even the core of songs played on the U.S. tour, carries a new and satisfying tone. Springsteen sings the songs with renewed vigor, and the band plays at a level far above that of the '92 shows. Packaging for the set is satisfactory, with a few nice color photos from the show, a reprinted newspaper review and accurate track lists. On the whole, an excellent document of the '93 tour, not likely to be outdone.

•Solo Acoustic
(KTS Records)
Packaging: 6
Sound Quality: 6
Performance: 10

This documents Springsteen's surprise warm-up show from the Count Basie Theater last March. The sound quality is fair, and includes all the special one-off performances from that night. Just over half of the disc includes some never-before acoustic renditions of songs like "Point Blank," "Janey, Don't You Lose Heart," and the debut of "This Hard Land."

Other gems include "Achy Breaky Heart," "Does This Bus Stop at 82nd Street." Between song banter is preserved, and Bruce even rags on Southside for moving to Connecticut before playing "All the Way Home."

Packaging is fair, consisting of a few photos from 1992. To keep costs down, KTS wisely released the "best of" the Count Basie quickly. Although this has bang for the buck, future sets ought to be complete and have superior sound.

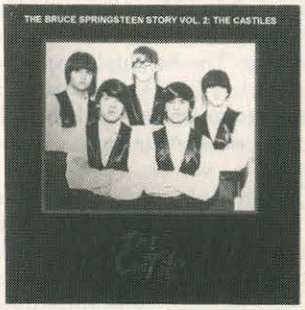
•The Bruce Springsteen Story Vol. 2: The Castiles
(EST Records)
Packaging: 8
Sound Quality: 4
Performance: 5

Consisting of the infamous two demos from the Castiles' unreleased acetate plus a live Castiles performance at the Left Foot Teen Club in St. Peter's Church, this 31 minute CD is an incredible look at Bruce's first band. All songs are in mono. The two demos are typical early '60s pop. The bands concert just six months after the demos were cut showed that the Castiles were a hard rockin' band capable of their share of late acid/early metal sound.

On this CD, Bruce covers Jimi Hendrix's "Fire." "See My Friend," meanwhile, makes up in intensity what it may lack in lyrics. Also covered is Donovan's "Catch the Wind," on which Bruce plays harmonica. The disc concludes with a '50s style instrumental.

A four page booklet features not only several standard Castiles photos but also several interesting promo poster reproductions of Castiles engagements.

None of the material on here has been bootlegged until now and is definitely an essential glimpse into Springsteen's roots. Young Springsteen fans should note that this material was recorded before they were born; older fans will relish this disc as it offers the earliest look into Springsteen's long career.



•Action in the Streets
(Unbelievable Music)
Packaging: 4
Sound Quality: 7
Performance: 9

This set is culled from two shows (2/13, Toronto, and 2/17, Cleveland) on the much-fabled 1977 tour and is the best title yet from that year. Of interest for completists is the segment on disc two that features 4 songs performed with Ronnie Spector, including "Say Goodbye to Hollywood." Two highlights are the title track and a great introduction before "It's My Life."

A slimline case housing the two CDs makes the set more attractive, but there aren't photos or liner notes, just a front and back cover.

•Capitol Soundcheck
(Great Dane)
Packaging: 7
Sound Quality: 6
Performance: 10

Comprised of part of the soundcheck from 9/20/78 (not 9/19, as listed on the sleeve), this 11 minute CD stands out for historical if not sonic purposes.

Two of the three songs presented were played only one time. The first is the Hank Williams standard "Wedding Bells," and its performance lends credence to Emmylou Harris's assertion that Bruce Springsteen is a country singer at heart. The E Street Band contributes a rich, authentic country arrangement, complete with down-home pickin' from Miami Steve and beautiful piano and organ from the respective players. Bruce himself delivers a powerfully melancholic lead vocal. Unfortunately, this song was never performed in front of an audience. It would have worked perfectly.

The second gem is a unique version of "The Ties That Bind." Not only is it an experiment, but also the listener is treated to hearing Bruce work up the chord progression and leads before running through it with the band (it sounds like the first time they had played the song). The lyrics differ from the version debuted later in the tour and subsequently released. After asking if anyone remembers "Good Rockin' Tonight," Bruce runs the band through an abridged version.

The sound was lifted from a video, allegedly shot by a security guard and is somewhat improved over tapes in circulation. It is a little flat and distant, but all the instruments are audible and the sound is listenable overall. Two unique performances and a lengthy work-up before one of them: for fans with an interest in Springsteen's creativity at soundchecks, this disc is a must.

CD BRIEFS

(scale of five stars)

★★ 1/2 *Zurich Revisited*
(Golden Stars)
Packaging: 4
Sound Quality: 6
Performance: 8

This two CD set documents an average European show (4/8/93) in average quality. A mid-first set "Darkness" (full band) and a solo "Dancing in the Dark" are the highlights.

★★★ *Good Seats Still Available*
(Unbelievable Music)
Packaging: 7
Sound Quality: 8
Performance: 7

Mastered from a great quality tape of 10/13/92, Tacoma. Clever packaging of a distinctly local flavor. "The Big Muddy" and "Soul Driver" highlight.

★★★ *Ramblin' Gamblin' Man*
Packaging: 7
Sound Quality: 7
Performance: 6

The entire performance from 9/25/92, Los Angeles, in very good quality, plus some of the highlights of the 1992 tour, in varying sound quality. Housed in a wooden box.

★★ 1/2 *Covering Them*
(Post Script)
Packaging: 6
Sound Quality: 6
Performance: 7

Various cover songs from Europe are compiled here in varying quality. Highlight is Bruce's guest appearance in Germany. Most of the other songs are available in better quality on other titles.

★★ 1/2 *The Promise Is Spoken*
(Scorpio)
Packaging: 6
Sound Quality: 6
Performance: 8

A best-of the three *Darkness* outtakes CDs reviewed in #43 (*The Way, The Iceman, The Promise*). This CD offers better packaging and track selection, cutting some of the redundancy. Unfortunately, the sound quality is unimproved.

Bruce Tunkel

Last Chance Afternoon

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— Jay Lustig, *New Jersey Star Ledger*

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—Mike Marone, *Friday Morning Quarterback*

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ON DISC

Sony offers bonus Mastersound Sampler

Patti Scialfa album released

After Bruce Springsteen shifted gears and essentially dropped out of sight after his two dates in New Jersey and New York, the collecting scene quickly followed suit. There were no new singles, non-LP B-sides, or live tracks to coincide with the tour's end.

However, lucky fans who bought the Silver Circle tickets for the Kristen Ann Carr Fund concert in New York received a beautiful limited edition boxed set of Springsteen's entire Columbia Records studio catalog on compact disc. Housed in a gorgeous silver box with a hinged top, the set ran from *Greetings From Asbury Park* thru *In Concert* (ironically, the *Live 1975-85* set was not included). The concert's symbolic flower and date were printed on the top. The relative value of this box is difficult to assess. The obvious attraction is having Springsteen's catalog in a commemorative box. Few have surfaced on the collector's market.

In the continuing saga of the Mastersound edition of *Born to Run* compact disc, Sony announced in July that they would honor their pledge to do "something special" for consumers who were saddled with the original defective version. Sony, of course, offered to exchange the flawed disc for a brand new one. In addition, they threw in a bonus CD, the newly compiled *35th Anniversary Compact Disc Sampler* (marking the 35th anniversary of *Stereo Review*) which included "Thunder Road." Other artists appearing on the CD are Miles Davis, Bob Dylan, Aerosmith, and Billy Joel, all of whom had albums released in the first wave of Mastersound titles. Those who want to exchange their CDs should call Sony's toll-free Quality Assurance line at 1 (800) 255-7514.

Several *Backstreets* readers wrote to say that they were pleasantly surprised to receive the new *Born to Run* and the sampler. While Sony deserves kudos for their generosity in this instance, there is no assurance that the practice will continue indefinitely. The people who answer the phone knew nothing of the offer, simply taking information and passing it on. It would seem that Sony would extend the offer for each consumer, even months from now, but that may not be the case.

Springsteen songs have appeared on numerous compilations, including *American Reunion*, an obscure European promotional CD5 that included Sony and Warner Bros. artists. Springsteen's "Human Touch" joins songs by Fleetwood Mac and R.E.M. on this once-only release that celebrated, oddly, the Presidential Inaugural. *Hits You Might Have Missed* included "If I Should Fall Behind," teaming Bruce for the first time with country singer Rodney Crowell. Another promo was the *Grammy Nominees Sampler* where "Human Touch" appeared. "Born to Run" appears on *TM Century's Gold Disc #7501*, a promo CD sampler that features 19 tracks by the Beatles, Dire Straits, and plenty of '70s chestnuts like Player's "Baby Come Back" and Gary Wright's "Dream Weaver." These compilations are increasingly common for FM stations. For fans of Springsteen and '70s music, this CD is a must.

Patti Scialfa released her first album, *Rumble Doll*, on Columbia, in July. It spawned a promotional domestic CD5, a promo-only cassette with an alternate cover, and even a non-LP B-side in Europe, a song called "Line of Faith."

In the U.S., Columbia issued a promotional CD5 for "As Long As I Can Be With You." It featured the album version and an edited version for radio. The album's advance cassette came with an alternate color insert, without photos, and featured a design unique to that release.

"As Long As I Can Be With You" was the single in Europe as well, but it featured "Line of Faith," a non-LP B-side. Originally, "Line of Faith" was on the record, but was taken off at the last minute. Scialfa joked with a writer for London's *Sunday Times* that she had the title first, and that Springsteen co-opted the title for his own "Leap of Faith." It's doubtful that the song was lifted to avoid confusion between the two. "As Long" also appeared on *Discoveries Vol. V*, a sampler CD compiled by Bassin Distributors.

New releases, clockwise from upper left: Rumble Doll *promo cassette; new Southside Johnny compilation on Rhino; and the promo CD5 for Patti's single.*

For Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes, the hits just keep coming. On the heels of the successful *Better Days* and the Epic/Legacy *Best of. . .* CD, Rhino Records released *All I Want is Everything: Best of 1979-1991*. This marks the first compilation of Southside's often-overlooked middle period work, of which he wrote that "there were times of great euphoria and depressions so deep I thought I'd never crawl out of them. I'm glad I got the chance to make these records (even the ones that nearly killed me) and hope some pleasure is gotten from them."

Rhino, a label known for its great reissues, assembled a lineup that has no overlap with the Epic/Legacy release (which concentrates on songs from earlier albums like *Hearts of Stone*). The tracks include "Trash It Up," "New Coat of Paint," and "Walk Away Renee" (this song from *At Least We Got Shoes* was only available on CD in the U.S. as a Japanese import).

Nils Lofgren contributed to Ringo Starr's new album *Live from Montreaux* on Ryko. As part of the Ringo's All Starr band, Nils offers up a rousing live version of "Walking Nerve" from his 1991 album, *Silver Lining*. He also appears on other All Starr tracks.

The Shore scene remains active as well, with a couple releases making waves. Bobby Bandiera celebrated the release of his first full-length record with a party at Cheers in Long Branch on September 22. Eight songs appear on the self-titled album, including three new tunes: "Straight For Your Love," "Change Change Change," "World Stand Still." Fan favorites like "Heart of Fire" and "C'mon Caroline '93" round out the album.

Former Red House frontman Bruce Tunkel released his first solo project, *Last Chance Afternoon*, on the upstart Safety Net label. The album's first single, "I Said a Prayer," garnered airplay while the video was in rotation on MTV. In addition to writing all the songs, Tunkel engineered, produced, and played most of the instruments, truly marking a solo debut.

CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONALS

SCOTT SILVERNAIL: HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR cherished friend. Love, your fellow Bruce fans, Jo, Gary and Ryan

JEREMY AND JOSHUA: CROSS MY HEART, I LOVE you. Dad

TERESA, OH WON'T YOU BABY BE IN MY BOOK OF dreams. 10-2-93. I love you, Doug

KIMBERLY: THE WAY YOU WARM ME BABY WHEN I'm cold, I get shivers down my spine girl and all I wanna do is hold you tight. Cuddle up angel, cuddle up my little dove. I love you with all the madness in my soul. Seth

STEVE: THESE REALLY ARE BETTER DAYS! I LOVE you, our house, our puppy Asbury... and our lives together. Love, Cindie

SENATOR KERREY: THANKS FOR VOTING FOR our country

MEADOWLANDS 6/24/93: THANKS FRANK, JOHN, Dale, Heidi, Phil, and the guy who bought pizza, for a great day! Joe Lahr, Box 932, Keene, NH 03431

DONNA, THANKS FOR 6/24/93, THERE WAS magic in the night. It was all the beauty I could take. With you forever I'll stay! Mike

JAMBO: YOU ARE THE ONE, BABY I LOVE YOU. (*Lucky Town* track #4) Forever Yours, Linda

DEAR MARY, THANKS FOR ONE GREAT YEAR OF marriage. Love, Anthony

BRUCE FANS WANTED FOR PH.D. RESEARCH. Short questionnaire on your fan experience. Contact D. Cavicchi, Box 1892, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912

EXACTOKNIFE MIKE: DOES "BOBBY JEAN" BRING you to tears? Does "Better Days" inspire you? You must be hooked on classics. "Cut loose" with Bruce. The "Other" GM Bruce Fan

HUNGRY HEART (19) SEEKS USA GIRL (16-25) to write, trade, trips, etc. Duncan O'Neil, 7 Snowshill, Worcester, WR4 9PP, ENGLAND

KENT, DOES THE BOSS PLAY ATLANTA? GOOD luck, John and Mike

RAE AND KATHY FROM ALLENTOWN: WHERE ARE ya? Call me; the number is in the last issue. Flynn

TO A TRUE BRUCE FAN, MARIA MAHANEY MY Beautiful Reward. Your Tramp forever, Dan Mahaney

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BRUCE AND ALL THE BEST FOR your life! With friendship, Virginia Tixi - Italy

IF YOU ATTENDED "LADY BETH" IN 1986 AT THE Stone Pony and Bruce talked to you after the play, please contact HP, W. 73rd St. #2R, New York, NY 10023

TORONTO BRUCE TRAMPS SEEK OTHER BRUCE tramps for Bruce get-togethers. Ontario, Michigan, NY, NJ, Illinois tramps please write: BT 394 Chieftan Circle, Mississauga, Ontario L4Z 3A4

CONGRATULATIONS, PATTI, ON THE LONG awaited birth of your wonderful album and the pending birth of your new baby. Don't forget the loyal East coast fans who would love to see you perform. Michelle Weiss, Staten Island

BRUCE TRAMP FROM QUEBEC WANTS PENPALS from Quebec. Jimmy Denvers, 11 Beauchesne, Repentigny Quebec, Canada J5Y 1K1

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BRUCE, AND MARK Shmigalsky of Connellsville PA. Let's hope '95 will be a tour year. Love, Marilyn McNabb

WANTED

TAPED ON THE '92-'93 TOUR? LET'S TRADE 1st Gen for 1st gen. Also, U2, Who, R.E.M., Dylan. Huge masters collection, '72-'92. JEMS, PO Box 11081, Tacoma, WA 98411. We won't sell tapes under any circumstances

BRUCE SONGBOOKS PLUS VIDEOS, BUY OR trade. Richard, 2508 Benvenue #304, Berkeley, CA 94704

THE TOUR IS OVER AND WHAT ELSE CAN WE do now but roll those tape decks! Bruce and related tapes wanted. Your list gets ours. Hundreds to trade. Contact Twin Cities Fans Mark/Brian c/o 102 20th Ave. No. South St. Paul, MN 55075

SETTLE FOR LOVE? JOE ELY COLLECTOR SINCE 1979 looking to trade in US and overseas. Have Texas size Ely list of both audio and video to trade. Seeking Bruce with Joe in Ireland (photos and tapes), both NY Springsteen benefit shows and any Ely shows, posters, etc., from 1977-1993. Also have 1973-1988 Bruce tape list to trade from. Send to: Texas Rocker, 7605 Fort Hunt Rd., Alexandria, VA 22308. Phone: (703) 660-9647

DESPERATELY WANTED: I KISSED BRUCE 6/26/93. Need video and front row photos, also need photos outside Four Seasons Hotel in Boston 12/14/92. Shauna Bernier, 551 Salem St., Bradford, MA 01835

WHO WANTS TO TRADE? HAVE LOTS OF GREAT audio. Your list gets mine. Will also trade for blanks. Dave Sureck, 4038 Buxton, South Euclid, OH 44121

BRUCE DAT MASTERS TO TRADE. 6/24/93 NJ, 6/26/93 NY. Also, a lot of other first generation audio/video from '73-'93. Looking to trade for more of the same. If you have a DAT master or first generation please write: Tom Harry Jr., 10620 Liberty Road, Randallstown, MD 21133

LOOSE ENDS: THE BRUCE CONNECTION. AUDIO and video to trade or sell. Send SASE for list to: 144 Hamlet Ct., Riverdale, GA 30274. Or call (404) 473-1032 (7-10 p.m. EST M-F, Noon-10 p.m. weekends

WANTED: B-SIDES ON CD: HELD UP, JOHNNY, Santa, Two for the Road, Lucky Man, Roulette, Be True. Don Maess, 8460 Treetop Court N #1013, Miamisburg, OH 45342

WANTED: AUDIO & VIDEO BRUCE'S COLLECTORS who have master recordings to trade. I have large video & audio lists with video & audio master recordings. I can trade in NTSC! Please write to: Mauritzio Andreoli, Via Resistenza, 345, 41054 Marano S/P, Modena ITALY

NEEDED: 11/10/92 NASSAU COLISEUM, NEED video and front row photos. Mike Premo, 349 Harbor View Drive, Oyster Bay, NY 11771

WANTED: VIDEO FROM CHAPEL HILL, NC SHOW. Had front row seats, kissed Bruce, and hope someone out there has a video! Please call Susan at (919) 292-1753

LOOKING FOR PHOTOS TAKEN AT 6/24 Meadowlands show during "Havin' a Party." Mike. (215) 673-5009. 6511 Castor Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19149

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BRUCE AUDIO/VIDEO TAPES TO TRADE. WILL trade blanks. Your list gets mine. CJ Kurtzrock, 5751 Camino Del Sol #301, Boca Raton, FL 33433

BRUCE AUDIO TAPES TO TRADE. YOUR LIST GETS mine. Rick Kyle, 12877 S. Silver Plume Street, Parker, CO 80134

OVER 1,000 MAGAZINES, POSTERS, BUTTONS, 45's, etc. to trade for your audios. Please write Michele, 208 Henry St. South Amboy, NJ 08879

WANTED: VIDEO/PHOTOS OF BOSTON GARDEN 12/13/92. Lisa Johnson, PO Box 128, Medford, MA 02155

TRADERS: YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE. Your list gets mine. Especially looking for Count Basie. Chuck Garfien, 5 Butterfield Circle, Flossmoor, IL 60422

TOM GRAM, 300 HILLSIDE WEST, 175 FOREST Street, Waltham, MA 02154-4705. Your list gets mine

WANTED: SOUTHSIDE "SLOWDANCE" AND LITTLE Steven "Freedom: No Compromise" on CD. Kevin. (315) 637-1313 (collect)

LET'S TRADE HIGH QUALITY BLANK TAPES. Your list gets mine. Or will trade for blanks. David Kilgariff, 47 Whitehall Ct. Belle Mead, NJ 08502

TEXAN LOOKING FOR AMES, IOWA SHOW 10/30/92 to hear the "crowd that knew its Springsteen." Call collect (903) 885-9720

I COULD USE JUST A LITTLE HELP. NEED MORE audio/video. Send lists. Michael V. Walk, 318 Saratoga, San Antonio, TX 78213

TRADE ONE *BACKSTREETS* #11 FOR #29 & 33. Both or nothing. Keith Boyd, 56-2 George St., Rockaway, NJ 07866

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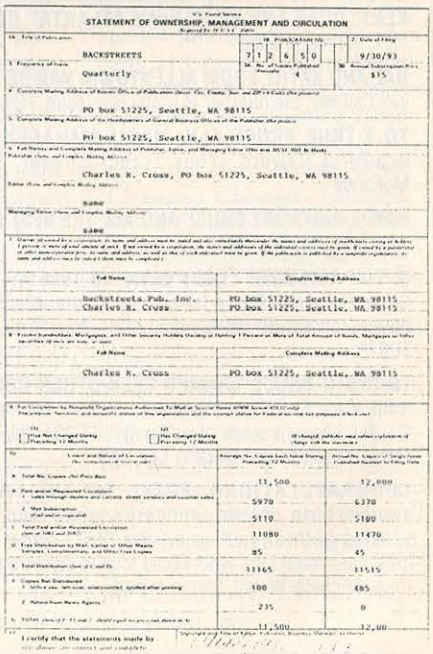

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